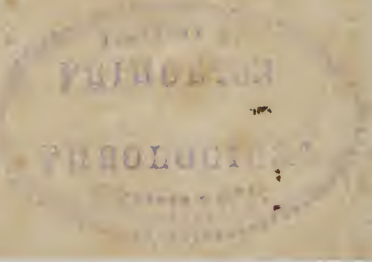

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Smyth, Thomas, 1808-1873
The nature and claims of
Young Men's Christian

THE

NATURE AND CLAIMS

OF

YOUNG MEN'S

Christian Associations.

BY THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D.D.
CHARLESTON, S. C.

"THE GLORY OF YOUNG MEN IS THEIR STRENGTH."—PROV. XX. 29.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
1857.

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by
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DEDICATED,

WITH HEARTFELT CONGRATULATIONS FOR THEIR PAST ACHIEVEMENTS,

AND

WITH EARNEST HOPES, EXPECTATIONS, AND PRAYERS FOR THEIR FUTURE PROSPERITY AND PROGRESS,

TO THE

Young Men's Christian Associations

IN THE UNITED STATES

AND THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTIAN WORLD;

AND, PERSONALLY, TO MY GREATLY ESTEEMED FRIEND,

ROBERT C. GILCHRIST,

U. S. C.

AND

President of the Young Men's Christian Association

OF CHARLESTON, S. C.

How precious a thing is youthful energy, if only it could be preserved entirely *englobed*, as it were, within the bosom of the young adventurer, till he can come and offer it forth a sacred emanation on yonder temple of truth and virtue. But, alas! all along as he goes towards it he advances through an avenue formed by a long line of tempters and demons on each side, all prompt to touch him with their conductors and draw the divine electric element, with which he is charged, away.

JOHN FOSTER.

The *way* of every man is declarative of the *end* of every man.

CECIL.

Youthful excesses are drafts on manhood and old age, most generally finding them bankrupt and beggars or not finding them at all.

VOICES OF NATURE.

Habits of youthful piety are drafts on God, payable at sight, for the support and comfort of manhood, old age, death, and immortality.

IBID

Sinful habits are grave-clothes of souls, by which they are bound by Satan for an everlasting burial. IBID.

Centre-pieces of wood are put by builders under an arch of stone, while it is in the process of construction, till the keystone is put in, Just such is the use Satan makes of pleasures to construct evil habits upon: the pleasure lasts perhaps until the habits are fully formed, but, that done, the structure may stand eternal; the pleasures are sent for firewood, and the hell begins in this life. COLERIDGE

THOUGH THY WAY BE DARK AND LONG,
THINK OF THEM THAT NOW ON HIGH
HAVE ATTAIN'D THE VICTORY.
IN A MOMENT 'TWILL BE PAST,
AND THE ENDLESS DIE BE CAST
IN THAT PLACE WHERE TIME IS NOT,
THOUGHTS THAT ARE ON EARTH FORGOT
TAKE THEIR PLACE AND EVER DWELL,
SET IN CALM UNSPEAKABLE,
AND ENSHRINED IN SILENCE STAY
TO ABIDE THE DREADFUL DAY.

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PREFATORY REMARKS.

The substance of the following volume was prepared at the instance of the Young Men's Christian Association of Charleston, S. C., and was delivered as one of a course of lectures during the past year. As some things in its application refer to that city, it is deemed best to retain their original form, both for usefulness there and as an illustration of the analogous and proportionate adaptation of such associations to other cities and communities.

The substance of the discourse, however, was devoted to an exhibition of the nature and claims of such associations in general, and may, it is hoped, and as the author has been encouraged to believe, be useful for distribution, as an introduction to a true knowledge of their character and importance,—as an encouragement to young men who are not, as well as those who are, professors of religion, to become associated with them,—and also as a portraiture of what these associations ought to be, what by the blessing of God they may be, and what in order to fulfil their perfect work and ministry of love they *must* be.

And may that divine Saviour from whose glorious gospel these associations derive their life make this and every other means employed for their advancement powerful, through His Holy Spirit, to the salvation and sanctification of many souls! Then shall these thoughts

However poor portray'd, set forth to view
With feeble eloquence, be such as may
Arrest some glance, some thought, which, entering in
The door of the life-kindling, shaping soul,
May haply there take root in tender soil,
In youth's soft heart plant the immortal shoot
Of heaven-born virtue, which shall bear him fruit,
And bind his locks with amaranthine wreath;
May to the fount of action entrance find,
That streams which issue thence may bear the tinge
Of hope and dread expectance of the Judge
With echoing blast of the archangel's trump.
Reader and writer on that morn must meet:
Thrice happy, could this theme arouse but one,
That, when all hearts are open'd, then this mark—
(On which men's fate is made to hang alone)—
Whether he has loved God or has loved self,
Has lived to Christ, or while he lived was dead,—
May on his soul be found by God impress'd
This is the mirror wherein souls are seen;
This is the Book. On this the scale depends.
This is announced to the eternal years,
And such alone pass to the rest of God.

Young Men's Christian Associations.

In addressing you, my young friends, I will, without preface, endeavour to present the nature and claims of Young Men's Christian Associations.

In doing so, the very first point to which attention shall be directed is the principle of association on which these Societies are based.

The principle of association holds a conspicuous place among the most potent forces that are now acting upon the world,—silent, invisible, and unpretending in its working, and yet powerful in its results beyond all other moral agencies. This has become proverbial. "Union is strength," and "United we conquer, while divided we fall," are now familiar applications to every interest of humanity of our Saviour's aphorism that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and of those other scriptural proverbs that "in the multitude of

counsellors there is safety," and that in them also "purposes are established."

The foundations on which this principle of association is based are deep-laid in the most essential powers and sympathies of our nature. It takes hold of them all, and combines them all in one concentrated, steady, and progressive force.

Association becomes WISDOM, by the united counsels of the multitude it brings together.

Association is also POWER; for this wisdom is power,—power to ascertain the true character and dimensions of the evil to be overcome or the good to be secured and the best time and manner in which that evil is to be assailed, and thus bring together all the resources of such combined energy that can be brought to bear upon the designed end. Ants are very insignificant creatures; but when associated together they can build cities, fill them with well-stored granaries, and wage resistless warfare against their enemies. A bee is very tiny, and, individually, very powerless; but bees when associated in swarms are more than a match for the fiercest animal, and for man himself. A single wolf may well be dreaded; but a full pack of hungry wolves must blanch with fear the stoutest heart, even though clad in mail and armed *cap-a-pie*. And thus also it is that, while one sinner can destroy much good, and one spiritual enemy is to be feared, it is when combined in a godless confederacy, or

into a well-disciplined host, that virtue and patriotism may be filled with well-grounded alarm and aroused to that conflict which finds in union strength, and in patriotic valour, victory.

Association therefore becomes wisdom and power for evil or for good in proportion as it is the combination of the wisdom and power, the virtue or the vice, of many. And while in itself it is only an abstract principle, having no vitality or will, it becomes endued with marvellous potency, and generates even the principle of LIFE. Life depends not upon the existence of any individual particles or even of organic structures, but upon a body in which many such are organically united and fitly joined together by that which every joint supplieth, and the whole animated and controlled by one living spirit. And so it is not in any single separate member of a class of people that their social, civil, political, moral, or religious life is found, but in the association of that class in some form of organized and well-conducted union. Osiris, whatever we make this mythological character to represent, is dead and inoperative so long as his members lie scattered over the world, and becomes instinct with life and power only when these *disjecta membra* are reconstructed in one living body. A body may be organically perfect in every limb, joint, and muscle. The lungs may play and the heart beat. The eyes may see and the ear hear, and the hand grasp and the feet move.

And, while the mouth can receive and the stomach digest nourishing food, that body may live and move and have being. And yet it may be a paralyzed, feeble, halting, and imbecile body, incapable of any active, strenuous, energetic exertion, of any high, patriotic, or benevolent enterprise. But let those various organs receive the vitalizing, sustaining co-operation of all the myriad invisible nerves; let these, however silently and involuntarily, contribute each in their own minute locality their proportion of strength; and, by that association of parts and powers, a body otherwise feeble and inoperative becomes strong, and powerful, and capable of indomitable energy.

The power of any body, therefore, lies not in the combination of organs all equally strong, vigorous, and important. Some are and must be such. Some are and must be prominent:—the eye to see, the tongue to speak, the head to plan, the hands to execute, and the feet to convey and sustain. But these are not on this account more essential, though more observed and honoured. The lungs which play, the heart which beats, the nerves which feel and receive and give quick and lightning sensibility, are equally essential. And, in like manner, an association of men, to be strong, must combine rich and poor, humble and great, learned and ignorant, wise and simple, thinkers, labourers, soldiers to fight, sappers and miners to prepare the way and remove obsta-

cles, those that "wait beside the stuff" and manage the internal concerns, and the poor wise man whose counsel on an emergency may save the city.

Thy servants militant below
Have each, O LORD, their post;
As thou appoint'st who best dost know
The soldiers of thine host:
Some in the van thou call'st to *do*
And the day's heat to share;
And in the rearward not a few
Thou only bidd'st to *bear*.

Blessed and most gracious encouragement to all—in all times, ages, circumstances, and with whatever of strength, talent, means, or influence—to associate together in the Lord's service, under the Master's eye, and with the Master's promise that if there be only a willing mind it is accepted, "not according to what a man hath not, but according to what he hath," and to what he purposeth in his heart.

By no new path, untried before,
Thy servants dost Thou lead;
The selfsame promise as of yore
Supports the selfsame need:
The faith for which thy saints endured
The dungeon or the stake,
That very faith, with hearts assured,
Upon our lips we take.

Though scatter'd widely left and right,
And sent to various posts,
One is the battle that we fight
Beneath one LORD of hosts.

We know not, we shall never know,
Our fellow-labourers here;
But they that strive one strife below
Shall in one joy appear.

They need, O LORD, thy special grace
That fight in this world's view,
But in the sick-room face to face
Is Satan vanquished too:
Both need the same protecting hand
To keep them undefiled,
And both shall in Thy presence stand,—
The martyr and thy child!

But association not only concentrates knowledge, accumulates power, and creates social life; it awakens sympathy. As face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man. It is instinct with sympathy. It responds with electric force to every impulse from kindred souls. Individually, man holds his opinions timidly, and ventures to act upon them cautiously and with doubting unbelief. But when they are embodied in a constitution, adopted by others, and represented in living acts, they receive a strength which is ever augmented by the play of sympathy in a community of associated efforts. Common principles, interests, employments, and enjoyments, are its very life-blood and impart at once vitality, energy, and sympathy to any society.

Association is, on all these accounts, the fountain of PLEASURE. It draws together. It inspires con-

fidence. It gives play to all the social tendencies of our nature. It entices a man out of his own solitary egotism, vanity, and pride; irradiates his gloom; sweetens his bitterness; cheers his solitude; dries his tears; inspires hope; kindles ambition and rivalry to excel; and enlarges, ennobles, and elevates by the full activity it provides for all the powers both of mind and body.

But, to pass on from this very fruitful topic, I would only further remark that association secures PERMANENCE, STABILITY, and GROWTH. Life in one may wane, while it waxes strong in another. Faith in one may be weak, while in another it is vigorous. Hope may shine tremblingly in one, and yet burn brightly in his neighbour. Health may fail in some, and yet increase and strengthen in the rest. Interest in the common object may lose its power over some, while others become ignited and rekindle the expiring fire. And thus, while existing members may perish, yet this takes place so gradually that THE ASSOCIATION may remain unchanged, or even strengthen and increase

ALL ASSOCIATION POWERFUL—CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION GLORIOUS.

As an ASSOCIATION, therefore, we cannot but regard this society as a body which commands our most lively and earnest attention to its PRINCIPLES

and ENDS. As an association, it is an embodiment of knowledge, power, life, sympathy, enjoyment, and permanent and progressive stability. But whether it is such for good or evil depends upon its principles and ends. An association is a living, organized, gigantic power. But, if its associating principles are evil, it will only resemble the accumulated mass of snowy particles which congeal upon the mountain's brow until they constitute the avalanche, the fall of whose illimitable mass carries resistless destruction to the plains beneath. But if, on the other hand, its cohering principles are benign, such an association resembles the accumulation of those same vaporous particles in the clouds of heaven, which are borne along by the winds until they pour down upon every dry and thirsty field the refreshing, fertilizing rain.

What importance, therefore, is attached to this society by the fact that it is a CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,—an association based upon Christian truth; animated by Christian principle; actuated by Christian motives; breathing only the atmosphere of Christian love; inspired by Christian fellowship, sympathy, and experience; guided and sustained by Christian life; looking for its wisdom and strength to heavenly teaching and divine power; cementing its bonds by mutual prayer, intercourse, and encouragement; and aiming only at the Christian and God-like ends of mutual instruction, improvement, usefulness, health,

happiness, and prosperity, and all these for the body as well as for the soul, for this world as well as the world to come, for eternity as well as time!

What sublimity and glory are found in the contemplation of such an association! How does it tower above all others outside of the church, like David among his brethren, or Mount Zion among the other hills of the Holy Land, or the church of God among all other associations existing, or capable of existence, among men!

THE PRINCIPLE OF ASSOCIATION ORIGINATED BY CHRISTIANITY.

This leads me to observe that the principle of association, like every other good and perfect gift, is from above, and is the direct result of that very Christianity which constitutes the avowed basis of this society. Though apparently so obvious and simple, and so capable of universal application, nevertheless, the principle of association was altogether unknown in the ancient world and among the most civilized and refined nations. Men were indeed always banded together by the force of circumstances, by sudden and temporary impulse, by stern necessity, or by the overmastering power of despotism. But anterior to Christianity men had no principle to combine them together into voluntary and permanent bodies, and no common

end to sustain and animate their hopes. The very reverse was the object aimed at by every government, and by every individual. Separation, segregation, and cautious isolation were necessary alike to personal security and to undisturbed public authority.

> "They forged the links of martial law, that bind,
> Enslave, imbrute, and mechanize the mind."

Combinations were conspiracies, or the explosions of a volcano,—the terrific ministry of inward fires, which after their devastating outburst soon congealed, and left the world neither wiser, nor better, nor disenthralled. The will of one or of a few men, or the caprice of tumultuous passion and wild cabal, determined the fate and fortune of millions.

The principle of association had its origin in Christianity and its first exemplification in Christian churches. Here first the world saw men voluntarily combining together upon the basis of truths individually received,—under rules and forms publicly acknowledged,—under officers chosen from among themselves,—and for the accomplishment of ends common to them all and yet not bearing upon the selfish interests of any.

Here first was exemplified that divine spirit of Christian love,—

"That fire which in each breast burns all beside,
All that is earthly, all of selfish love,
Projects of low-brow'd indolence and pride,—
Until they feel in Christ they live and move
And breathe regenerate life of those above."

Thus promulgated and developed, the world has learned the unspeakable value of this principle, and has found in it the lever for overthrowing the mightiest dynasties, and for accomplishing the greatest revolutions in political and scientific theories; so that association is now the very first principle in all movements for social, civil, or moral reform.

CHRISTIANITY PROVIDES FOR CHRISTIAN, AS WELL AS ECCLESIASTICAL, ASSOCIATIONS.

The time, we hope, has also come, when, under the inspiration of Christian truth, Christian principle, and Christian motives, this divinely-originated principle of association will be employed in combining together the talent, influence, piety, and energy of all who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours, for the advancement of the cause of Christ, the promotion of each other's welfare, and the best interests of their fellow-men.

God forbid that I should say aught to dim the lustre or cloud the glory of the churches of Christ!

"There my best friends, my kindred, dwell;
There God my Saviour reigns."

In a Christian church I was myself born, nurtured, and fed. With it are associated my earliest aspirations, my warmest thoughts, my purest joys, my most sincere and substantial pleasures here on earth, and my clearest views and most satisfying earnests of heaven. The heart needs a resting-place such as the world, with all its paradises, and home, with all its delights, cannot give; and it finds this in the church. The soul needs a temple where it may retire, apart from all human teachers and all the vain janglings and discordant voices of man's philosophy, and, sitting at the feet of Jesus, have its best principles strengthened, its loftiest aspirations encouraged, its sublime instincts realized, and its unutterable and unquenchable longings satisfied; and it finds this in the church. The soul needs also a sanctuary where it may retreat from every stormy wind that blows and from every rude and heart-lacerating grief; and, as it sits under the droppings of the sanctuary with great delight and hides itself there under the shadow of the all-protecting wings until every calamity is overpassed, it finds this refuge in the church. The church is the fold where the "foot-sore traveller," weary and heavy laden, finds rest, and the social spiritual home—

"So like a little heaven below"—

where the sad and solitary and broken-hearted, who go mourning amid the desert crowds of cities, find

sympathy and solace and a welcome greeting among the brotherhood of Christ,—

> "No more a stranger or a guest,
> But like a child at home."

Christianity has certainly not yet developed all its energy as the light, the leaven, and the salt of the earth. As the power of God not only for the salvation but also for the regeneration of the world, its force is still to a great extent latent, because unapplied. Like some mighty engine which gives motion to a thousand wheels for the perfection of some useful products of manufacture, but which is capable of accomplishing indirectly still greater results, so is it with Christianity. Directly and primarily, it is designed to impart vitality and permanent activity to Christian churches, of which its TRUTH is both the pillar and the ground. To these pertain the promises, provisions, ordinances, and preaching of the gospel,—the grand instrumentality for the world's conversion unto God; and churches therefore are ordinarily the birthplace of souls and the wells of salvation.

But, in addition to this primary and organic development, Christianity is capable of, and is designed to accomplish, manifold beneficial results. It does not bring forth and train up and teach all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, to its children, that, when nurtured in the admonition of the Lord

and grown to the stature of men in Christ Jesus, they may keep at home beside their mother's lap, dandled upon the knee of indulgence, fondled in the bosom of her soothing affection, feasted on the joy her promises afford, and luxuriating in the beauties of holiness. Oh no! she trains their hands to war, to labour, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Girding up their loins and pointing to the hosts assembled for battle—

> What dread spectators watch their destined way!
> How 'mid assembled worlds they stand alone!
> "Come on," she cries; "list in the heavenly war,
> With shield of faith and with the Spirit's sword,
> Strong in the mail of God's unfailing word—
> The Urim and the Thummim of the Lord."

She sends them also into her vineyard to work. She leads them forth to the out-lying field, which is the world; and, as the eagle stirreth up her nest and sendeth forth her new-fledged young that they may circle with her in her heavenward flight, so does the church send forth her sons into the field of duty and of conflict, that they may fight manfully the good fight of faith, work the work of God, and learn

> How much by prayer one fervent soul may throw
> Into the scale where kingdoms now are weigh'd.

It is therefore the very object of the education imparted by Christian churches to make their children wise to win souls for Christ; to save the perishing

from death; to multiply the trophies of redeeming love; to bring in many outcast wanderers to their Father's house; to scatter wide around them the seeds of life immortal; and thus to prove that, while her end is salvation and her destination eternity, Christianity is the life and power of all charity, philanthropy, patriotism, morality, order, and of whatsoever things are just, true, pure, honest, lovely, and of good report,—if there be any virtue and if there be any praise among men; to prove that Christianity is, in short, the true catholikon for rent and torn humanity,—a law of attraction operating in the very highest region of humanity, the region of thought and conviction,—and "a prophecy that the Babelisms of men shall yet be healed by the consummated act of which the day of Pentecost was but the beginning and the pledge."

To this invisible and silent operation of Christianity in its indirect influences and beyond its ecclesiastical limits, will be attributed without controversy the origin and progress of modern civilization; the triumph of law, order, and liberty, which are its natural offspring; the sense of personal responsibility, and its collateral rights; the elevation of morals; the power of conscience in creating conscientiousness, and, therefore, confidence; and that ever-widening commerce which is based upon the pre-existence of these fruits of the tree of life, and which is so opening up all parts of the world rapidly

and so indissolubly binding them together in one vast community,—

Many, yet one, in union manifold.

To the Christian, therefore, the world is a field of duty, life a sacrifice to duty, his fellow-men the objects of his love and pity which duty does not less require than acts of justice and of honesty:—

For around, in silence dread,
All unseen above his head
Like an amphitheatre,
Stand the angelic inmates there,
Watching how man does his part.
There are writ the deeds of men,
With a diamond-pointed pen,
On a plate of adamant
For eternity to chant.
Syllabled in courts above,
They are writ, and they shall last,
Dipp'd in colours of the heart
That none from his own doom may part.

Such is the educated, intelligent, heaven-directed Christian:—

Holiness unto the Lord
Marks his staff, his scrip, his board,
Harp and spade, and book and sword,—
All the royal priesthood use.
Faith through all doth worth infuse;
Giving even immortal worth
To the lowliest tasks of earth,

So that, lit by holy love,
Lustrous as the stars above,
Each with its own colour dight
Is replete with living light.

Animated by such a spirit, the Christian cannot live alone, or for himself alone. He is borne towards heaven on the wings of zeal. His very prayers come back to him laden with thoughts of love, and he is thus led to associate himself with all who, like him, are eager to devote themselves to the zealous prosecution of every good work.

Christianity therefore provides in itself—in the very spirit it infuses and the principle of association it embodies—for the union of all its followers, not only in churches, but in all things practical, evangelical, and experimental, wherein, notwithstanding their ecclesiastical differences, they are "agreed, and in advancing which they are able to walk by the same rule, to mind the same things, and to be zealously affected, striving together for the furtherance of the gospel, and provoking one another to love and zeal and good works."

The existence of various churches leads to manifold good results, and is, no doubt, an intended adaptation to the present weak and imperfect condition of even the holiest Christians. The evils incident to such different churches are, however, very great, and constitute a very serious hinderance to the progress of the truth. It may therefore be well ex-

pected that some provision has been made for the accomplishment of the incalculable good, and for the avoidance of the serious evils of so many separate tribes, with their selfish jealousies, in the one Israel of God. Now, this, we think, is found in the principle of association combining together Christians of every evangelical name, for the united prosecution of labours of love,—a fact powerful enough to answer all the objections of captious and sneering infidelity,—the spontaneous avowal that all the disciples of the Great Teacher are servants of the "one Lord," and animated by "one Spirit."

For what else did the divine love and wisdom of God reveal and exemplify this powerful principle? Not surely to be dormant. Not to putrefy like corrupted air imprisoned in some pent-up well, there to breed the morbific elements of sectarian jealousy and bigotry, of malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness. Not to be caught up and imbibed by the world without and appropriated to its own temporal and transient interests. Nor was this principle of association revealed that in the hands of God's enemies it might confederate together the powers of earth and hell against the church and her sacred oracles and ordinances. No! This principle was given, that, like the vital air we breathe and the balmy waters by which we exist, it might find its vitality, power, and purity preserved and multiplied by free and loving expansion,—by an illimit-

able diffusion permeating every lane and byway, every field and garden, giving and receiving, blessing and being blessed, as it goes;—and that it might combine together in one atmosphere of holy love, in one swelling tide of Christian activity, all the separate particles of divine life.

Love is like the ocean,—
  Ever fresh and strong;
Birth and life and motion,
  Speed and strength and song,
With which, the world surrounding,
  It keeps it green and young.

Yes! love is ever flowing,
  Flowing ever down,
And through all lands going
  From the heavenly throne.

What a Satanic perversion of this principle of association, then, has led Christians hitherto to run down Christianity into exclusive sects, to erect around them impassable walls, and to employ so much of their talent and ingenuity in perpetuating old rents and in multiplying new ones!

Christians have too long and vainly endeavoured to secure perfect unity in all things believed,—in both the *credenda* and the *agenda*, the *belief* and the *practice* of Christianity,—and to make this the basis of unity, communion, and love. It is now time to allow Christian love to exercise its irrepressible desire to embrace as brethren in Christ Jesus all

who give evidence of having within them in living efficacy the truth as it is in Jesus. This will generate not an ecclesiastical union merely, but what is still more heavenly, a personal and divine union,—*personal* between believer and believer of every name,—and *divine* between all believers and Christ their Head. This also will originate and increase Christian zeal. For, as the heat of the earth is produced not so much by the direct rays of the sun shining upon it or from its relation to that body, as by the refraction and reflection of heat imparted, so it is not merely by the direct influences of Christ upon the heart that Christian zeal is enkindled, but still more by that zeal reflected and refracted in the atmosphere of love by Christ's peculiar people made by His Spirit zealous for good works.

Indeed, analogy may lead us to suggest—what the word of God authorizes us to believe—that this wide sphere of Christian development is essential to the order and harmony of churches themselves. There is an analogy between the Christian system and our planetary system. In both we find numerous independent bodies, separate and complete in their own organization and revolving upon their own axes and within their own proper sphere, and, by the necessary laws of their planetary or ecclesiastical existence, giving light within that sphere. But in both also we are led to the contemplation, as necessary to the perfection of the system, of a still wider

sphere, in which all these revolving bodies are attracted and preserved in their order and harmony, by one great central body around which they move,—

> Forever singing, as they shine,
> The hand that made us is divine.

Glorious and sublime conception! Oh the depth and height of the wisdom and power of Christ the Sun of righteousness! the great central luminary of the spiritual universe! who binds together in one divine system by the one law of love, all his churches and all his children on earth and in heaven in time and throughout eternity, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge and of the love of the Son of God!

The children of this world have been wiser in their generation. They have employed this principle of association in the cause of political reform, of scientific discovery, of national regeneration, and of infidel and atheistic revolution; and with what transcendent, irresistible, and invariable results! And why? Because they applied it to some end to be gained, and not to some theory or doctrine to be expounded; to some work to be performed too vast for any one man or for any single society among men to achieve, but which, by a division of labour, and a concentration and a perseverance by successive labourers through successive years, might certainly be accomplished

So also must Christians act. Leaving every man to associate himself with the church of his conscientious preference, and as his primary and most important duty to consecrate his time, influence, and means so as to make that church all that a church ought to be,—this principle of association calls upon Christians to combine together in Christian institutions, societies, and associations, not to take up the doctrines of Christianity, but, on the already-established basis of these doctrines, to take up and accomplish the work of Christianity, the great practical work of Christian charity,—the carrying of the gospel to every man and to every man's home and business and bosom, and, with the gospel, together with that peace and goodwill, that love and help and consolation, which are its necessary manifestations, its life-giving fruits.

This, then, is the field opened up to Christian young men, and to which these associations lead them forth. The great idea has been conceived. It has taken root. It has sprung up unheeded and without observation. It has drunk in celestial air. It has been nourished by the dews of prayer—

> Unseen, unknown, shrouded with many a care,
> And scarce discernible to fleshly eye.

But it has shot up a goodly tree. Its branches now extend from sea to sea and from shore to shore. Its leaves are already for the healing of many nations;—

And soon, released, its stature fills the sky
And soars the child of immortality.

In these associations we have the true Evangelical Alliance,—an alliance which, leaving all doctrinal, ecclesiastical, and political questions, consecrates itself to the one blessed aim of combining, elevating, and sanctifying young men;—for the one great end of gathering in the outcast, of being a friend to the friendless, a home to the homeless, and a blessing to all.

On this to fix the heart and eyes
Will heal the sores of controversial strife,
Strengthen our wills, our motives purify,
Humble our hearts, make single-eyed to see
And single-hearted to embrace the truth,
And to behold the pregnant thunder-cloud
Bound with the rainbow which surrounds the Judge,
Which bids God's children hasten 'neath the roof
Of God's own sheltering house, and there await
His coming on with tender offices,
Each emulous his brother to befriend,
Each to forget himself. Such have no ear
For controversial triflings and debate,—
Naught that responds within to party strife.
To Christ's loved church, by endless discord riven,
Such love alone her union can restore,
And gain the blessings to that union given.

THE GLORY OF MAN, AND OF YOUNG MEN SPECIALLY.

As a CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, therefore, this society presents to us the combination of wisdom,

power, sympathy, and stability, under the guidance of heavenly truth, divine principle, and God-like love, for the holiest ends.

But its claims to our grateful consideration, high approval, hopeful expectation, and liberal assistance, are enhanced by its remaining feature,—namely, a CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF YOUNG MEN.

"The glory of young men is their strength." Man, in every stage of his existence, is a glorious being. He was made in the image of God.

> God gave to him to live 'mong living men,
> And set eternity around his birth,
> E'en as the circling sky surrounds the earth.

He was created but a little lower than the angels. He was exalted to the dignity of being God's representative, interpreter, and governor in the earth, —to serve him, to honour him, to glorify and enjoy him, here and in heaven, now, henceforth, and forever. To this high calling man's nature was adapted. In this man found his happiness. And to this inward disposition and character, and this outward activity and service, the gospel is designed to restore man.

As MAN is therefore a glorious being, so every capacity of man and every period of his life have their peculiar glory. As compared with other animals, man cannot, it is true, glory in his inherent physical strength, since in this he is far inferior.

But, in the comparison of man with man in the different stages of life, youth is characterized by the development of man's greatest strength, energy, and activity.

The glory of CHILDHOOD is that docility by which it is trained and matured for future usefulness, and that artless simplicity and conscious weakness which lead it to seek in others its wisdom and its strength.

> Within the arms of the great Lord of love,
> As in the teacher's seat, thou gentle child!
> We see thee, all our wisdom to reprove,—
> That we may learn of thee, thou wisest styled;
> Learn virgin innocence, learn mercy mild,
> Unlearn ambition, unlearn carefulness.
> Oh life where state of angels is fulfill'd,
> And saints who little have and need still less!
> A state which nothing hath, yet all things doth possess!

The HOARY HEAD, on the other hand, is a crown of glory when it is found in the way of righteousness, not weary in well-doing, but still bringing forth fruit unto God, and, by its well-stored wisdom and experience, bearing testimony for the truth and comfort of a life of piety.

> And who is yonder man?
> Himself a fleeting span,
> His shadow lengthening as the sun goes down,
> While growing sorrow marks him for her own;
> But o'er his head a golden crown
> The parting sun hath thrown.

His worldly wealth on earth forsaking,
Wing'd sides he finds, and light-wing'd feet,
And on his way his comrades is o'ertaking,
While Mercy now descends, her pilgrim true to meet,
And lead him, hand in hand, to her enduring seat.
Man seems to climb a mountain's side,
And, ever as he mounts, to leave behind
Green spots and flowers,
And shade of verdant bowers.
Bidding adieu to golden prime,
He flings aside to envious time
The richer thoughts that were to hope allied,
From barren to more barren still to climb.
Then, as he upward mounts, upon the wind
No more he hears the streamlet's melodies,
And childhood's freshness on his spirit dies.
But, now that he hath gain'd the height,
He seems to walk upon the glorious skies.
The sun that sets upon the seas beyond
Flings back the radiance of his golden wand,
And clothes him with a new, celestial light.
Anon he seems more large than man's estate,—
An angel seen on heaven's bright burnish'd gate.

In like manner, YOUTH IS GLORIOUS when, in its dewy freshness, its whole energy of body, soul, and spirit is consecrated to God, sanctified by his truth, devoted to his service, bearing the heat and burden of the day, and thus growing up into the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus.

"Light are their steps who in life's earliest dawn
The mountain-tops of heavenly life ascend,
Brushing the dew-drops from the spangled lawn,
Nor ever from the straighter path descend,
Fixing their eyes upon their journey's end.

Ere sin has wither'd up their morning bloom,
While streaks of purple morn their cheeks illume,
And on the head still sparkles heavenly dew,—
To see that dew like incense rise to heaven,
It is a precious sight, which angels view
In trembling joy and hope; immortal love
Hangs o'er it, watching every opening hue.
Plant, then, in youth's soft heart, the immortal shoots
Of heaven-born virtue; it shall bear thee fruit
And bind thy locks with amaranthine wreaths."

GREAT MEN HAVE PERFORMED THEIR GREAT ACTIONS WHILE YOUNG.

The strength and energy of youth have been characteristic of the greatest warriors, statesmen, orators, musicians, and poets of the world. Few of these have seen old age. Genius almost invariably covers itself with flowers and sheds around its fragrance in the spring and summer of life, though there have been a few instances in which it has ripened its fruit in the golden harvest of a bright autumnal sky. The same is true of the philanthropists, the benefactors, the self-sacrificing missionaries, the Christian merchants, and the holy and devoted men and women who, in every age and in every community, have wrought righteousness, been zealously affected in every good cause, shed around them the radiance of a holy example, scattered abroad in every direction the seeds of piety, lived in the affections of grateful hearts, and rested from

their labours here to enjoy the recompense of great reward in heaven.

> Lovers of souls, the children of our God!
> Ye are the generation whom the skies,
> And they who heaven's immortal floor have trod,
> Early admit into their sweet society.
> Such share their ministries; such angels prize;
> With such God's children everywhere rejoice,
> And join with them their prayers and charities,
> Till heaven itself shall gladden at their voice.*

THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH A SOLEMN TRUST.

The strength and energy of youth are therefore talents of inestimable worth, because they constitute a power of such incalculable force. They are gifts of God. They are a solemn trust, a holy prerogative, the rule and measure of a future reckoning and of an eternal retribution.

Neither is this a trust for life. As youth is the flower of life, so strength is the bloom and fragrance of the flower, soon, like it, to wither and decay. The impassioned energy of youth ceases with it, and leaves behind only the strength of habit, of will, and of experience; or, on the other hand, the weakness of ignorance, the bondage of a depraved heart, a defiled and polluted disposition, and a seared or vindictive conscience. "God giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth

* See note A.

strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."*

The strength of youth may be prostituted to vice, exhausted in selfish and sensual indulgence or in lazy indolence and inactivity, and, by hurrying man to an early grave or a premature old age, treasure up wrath against the day of wrath and righteous judgment of God, who will recompense every man according to his deeds and according to his ability and opportunity to know his duty,—tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that has done evil and that has not done good when it was in the power of his hand to do it.

"Oh, awful hour that endeth all our time!
When we before our Judge shall trembling stand
Who shall disclose the heart's deep labyrinth,
When sins of night shall see the face of day,
When earth and heaven as witnesses stand by,
And faltering tongues to gather'd worlds confess?"

* Isaiah xl. 29–31; Ecclesiastes xi. 9.

Oh, how sad and melancholy, then, it is to see young men, in a world

> "Where nothing seems unreal there
> Save what worldlings hope and fear,
> While o'er a gulf they fleeting pass
> On a bridge of brittle glass,"—

how melancholy, in such a world and with such a fleeting life, to see young men, under the full pressure of all those energies which might be and ought to be their glory, plunging headlong into the very depths of ungodliness, worldliness, and vice,—of drunkenness, surfeiting, and uncleanness,—yielding every power of soul and body as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,—and thus laboriously serving that master whose wages is death—the death of self-respect, of all pure and high aspirations, of hope, of character, of strength itself, and of all well-grounded expectation of salvation from the wrath to come.

Dead to all sense of shame, breaking loose from the innocence of their childhood, casting off the comely habits and pious practices of a paternal home, they plunge into excess of riot; and, borne onward by the impetus they have acquired in the descent, like one running down hill who cannot stop although he would, when they reach the mouth of the pit they are swept over it into perdition. Such young men—very significantly called *fast*—make

fearful progress, waxing, like "seducers," "worse and worse." Their night grows darker and darker; the edge of conscience duller and duller; the process of petrifaction in their heart more and more rapid till it acquires the hardness of stone; when, wallowing in the mire of the lowest sensuality, they can make even a boast of sins from which, on the day when they left their father's roof with his blessing on their head and a mother's warm tears on their cheek, they would have shrunk with feelings of indignant abhorrence, exclaiming, "Am I a dog, that I should do such things?"

YOUTHFUL SINS MANHOOD'S SORROWS AND DEATH'S PANGS.

The remark is often made, when the spectacle of such a young man is presented, that "he is sowing his wild oats," that after a time he will come to himself and reform, and that he may even yet be converted and saved and become perhaps a burning and shining light in the Christian church. Most dangerous and damnable delusion! Be it far from thee, O young man, O young Christian, O Christian parent! For while it is true that the natural tendency of youth is to the indulgence of unbridled passion, and this with less care about concealment than is felt in after-years, and while it is further true that, in some instances in which passion has been thus indulged

for a season, divine grace has been mighty enough to subdue that passion, and convert the open and hearty servant of sin into the open and hearty servant of Christ,—yet to say that the indulgence in sin of any kind either renders more probable the conversion of the sinner, or in any way fits the sinner for conversion or for usefulness after conversion, (if by mighty grace he is ever converted,)—or to say that sin of any kind can be indulged in at any period of life, without imminent danger,—is not more at variance with the teachings of human experience than it is with the lessons of the word of God.

During a ministry of nearly twenty years, says a pastor, I have seen a great deal of "wild oats" sown; and I never yet have seen any thing but "wild oats" *reaped* from "wild oats" *sown*. I have seen many a one in early manhood "throwing the reins upon the neck of his lusts," who, ere the prime of manhood was passed, had become an outcast from society and filled a dishonoured grave. And the more warm-hearted and generous the natural disposition of the young man was, the more rapidly has vice done its fearful work, and the more terrible the wreck it has made. I have seen others giving way for a time to the indulgence of passion, who afterwards became the hopeful subjects of divine grace. And I have heard them, as they have smarted under the consequences of their youthful sins, lament their course in early life, in language like that of Job—"Our bones are

full of the sins of our youth, which shall lie down with us in the dust."

A venerable old man, an elder in a Presbyterian church, was once surveying a tract of land, as an executor, in order to divide the estate. He and his companions reached a certain cleared lot on the mountain; and, turning to the gentleman with him, he said, "I never see this lot without a feeling of shame." "Why so?" asked his friend. "Because as many as fifty years ago, when I was a boy, I came with some other boys to this lot one night and took some watermelons without asking the owner's leave!"

This aged Christian would often dwell upon the sins of his youth and mourn over them.

It so happened one evening that Uncle H. (says a narrator of the fact) sat by the old-fashioned open fireplace, in which a cheerful fire was burning. He sat as if lost in earnest meditation, and occasionally a sigh escaped him. An individual present, noticing this, said, abruptly, "Well, what is the matter now?" Uncle H. seemed disinclined to answer the question; but, on being urged, replied, "I would rather have kept silent; but, as you insist on knowing, I am thinking about the sins of my youth; and, I must say, they trouble me!"

There was once boarding with him a religious professor who took different views of justification from those entertained by "Uncle H." This man

seemed to consider justification as nearly synonymous with forgetfulness of past sins. They often conversed on this point, the one asserting that when Christ forgives our sins we ought to forget them and have no more trouble about them, and that, if we do not, it is evident that they are not forgiven; the other replying that David, though forgiven, said, "My sin is ever before me," and that Paul, though forgiven, spoke with grief and shame about his having "persecuted the church of God."

This must be so. It is the law of nature. It is the necessary result of our mental and moral being. It is also the law of the kingdom of grace. As a man sows, so shall he reap. As a man sows, and what a man sows in the spring-time of life, he must reap in a multiplied harvest in the summer of manhood and the winter of old age. If he sows wind, he must then reap whirlwind. If he sows to the flesh, he must reap corruption. If he sows wild oats, he must, like the prodigal, vainly try to fill himself with the husks which the swine do eat. "Lust, when it is conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "Thou fool, that which thou sowest thou sowest not that which shall be," but what shall bear multiplied products, and "from every seed its own body and its own fruits."

"Who sows the serpent's teeth, let him not hope
To reap a joyous harvest."

"There can be little doubt that most persons settle the question of their eternal destiny while young. This is the time of roots and seeds, the time of foundations, the time of fountains and of laws, the time of principles and prophecies, that are to be developed and fulfilled in the man and in the angel, good or bad. This is the time of quick and vivid sensibility to impressions from abroad, whether good or evil; the imitative time of our being; the reproducing time of examples; the time of intense feeling and of energy and impulse in following the heart and in carrying out its purposes."

The process of self-education, as Foster says, is then going on, even though unobserved, and tending fast towards the ultimate fixed form of character.

"One season cannot be changed for another, the summer for the spring, nor the autumn for the summer. We go on, indeed, sowing seed all the way through life; and each successive period of life is a most impressive reality,—a period of probation and of seeds for the next period,—because what we were and what we did yesterday is continually coming out in consequences to-day. But the one grand seed-period of our being, the period of the oaks that build the ships in which our fortunes are embarked for eternity, the period of all the commanding fixtures and features of the character, is never repeated, and is ordinarily early in life. The roots of our earliest habits twine themselves all

about our immortality. The trunk of character, strengthened by such roots, is immovable; and the branches spread themselves out a mighty shade of foliage. So prodigiously, intensely energetic is the impressible period and growing power of our being. And it depends therefore upon what we meet with and entertain at such a period, whether we shall become apostles of good or of evil in our fallen world, because it meets with the growing, germinating power, the enthusiastic, imaginative, impulsive tendency, and carries the mind onward to results."*

How awful, then, Christian young man, is the infatuation of young men around you, growing up in all the wildness and inflexibility of their evil and corrupt natures, and filling the land with their rank and baleful luxuriance, their poisonous exhalations, and their soul-destroying fruits!

"Oh, what a wilderness about us lies
Of spirits, each wrapp'd round in fleshly cell,
Could we but see beyond each other's eyes
This universe of souls 'mong which we dwell,
Each in himself a world,—a heaven or hell
Therefore it is of life's short span
So often written in the sacred page,
Which, pointing immortality to man,
Holds up in mirror life's short pilgrimage,
In every form which may the soul engage,
And then each talent weighs in duty's scale.
Mysterious thought of never-ending age!

* From Dr. Cheever's "Voices of Nature."

At sight of which the strongest heart should pall,
And dread, ere heav'n be won, lest life itself should fail.
Each hour is like an angel, which, with wings,
Comes from and goes to heaven; yet empty ne'er
Comes or returns, but some occasion brings,
And hastens back to heaven, the tale to bear
Of evil, or fresh store to treasure there.
Pity looks down from heaven's o'erarching roof,
Awe-struck to see how swift our hour is sped,
To see while day and night weave the thin woof,
Eternity is hanging o'er the thread,
And then that hour that numbers 'mong the dead
Numbers us 'mong those that die no more:
Time marks not death with unperceived tread
Steal on behind; but, while he numbers o'er
His many days to come, death shuts the eternal door."

THE GLORY OF YOUTHFUL PIETY AND YOUNG MEN THE STRENGTH OF EVERY COMMUNITY.

On the other hand, how delightful is it to behold young men, inspired with the divine idea of association, united, together on the basis of love to Christ and love to sinners, sustained by the principle of faith in Christ, obedience to him, and recognition of the common salvation and the common brotherhood of humanity!

"Who can discern the beauty of that power,
When endless life within the soul is born!
Dawns on the soul the everlasting morn!
The aspiration of its lofty aim
Stilling the noise of passion and of mirth,
Set on her heritage of endless worth,
And her immortal birthright bent to claim?"

The strength and power of any community is in its young men. For weal or woe, they give it tone and character, and life and energy. They will also be its future leaders. Out of their ranks must come forth the husbands, the fathers, the merchants, the operatives, the municipal fathers and legislators, the pillars both of the state and of the church. The very being and, much more, the well-being, of this as of every other community, rests, therefore, upon the opinions, character, and habits of the young men whose strength is now their glory or their shame.

THE PECULIAR TEMPTATIONS OF YOUNG MEN.

And hence, of all other classes, our young men most emphatically stand in need of the benefits and blessings of Christian association. That energy, strength, and boldness which constitute their glory is at the same time the source of their greatest danger. Their pride, passion, and love of independence, like unbroken steeds, spurn the control of reason, laugh at experience, and, dreaming of no sickness, disease, or death, give the reins to passion, rush into the very whirlwind of temptation, and sport merrily while their hand is upon the lion's mane and their feet upon the hole of the serpent. The general arrangements of business, its ungodly "HASTING after" riches, its utter disregard of the health,

happiness, and morals of the young men who are its instruments, and the whole nature of their surrounding circumstances and conditions, expose our young men to peculiar and almost irresistible temptations.

The perverted spirit of our free institutions, the want of consideration, intellectual pride, immorality, and the inevitable tendency of spiritual darkness to shut out from itself the light, lead many young men to skepticism in one or other of its Protean forms. If too conscientious and enlightened to fall a prey to this snare of the destroyer, the same causes render young men unwilling to submit fully to the gospel, and induce them to take shelter from the storm and tempest of conscience in some refuge of lies, some man-constructed system of doctrine or philosophy, by which—imagining they must think for themselves, that is, hold opinions different from those around them—they are easily beguiled. "I have been," said such a one, when dying, "a most wicked and incorrigible opponent of the whole Christian system; and I know not why I was so, but for *the pride of opinion*."

In these ways, and by every device, Satan blinds the eyes of young men, closes their ears, and locks their hearts, so that they may permit their day of grace to pass away. This is all he wants; and his end is gained, whether this is accomplished by vice, folly, frivolity, or vain philosophy, falsely so called.

"The young Lord Littleton was in early life the subject of deep impressions, under the influence of which, he informs us, he retired at a particular time to his chamber to pray, with the intention of committing his soul to God. As he was on the point of kneeling to engage in prayer, he concluded to turn aside and close his window-shutter. At the window he saw a band of musicians parading the streets. The splendour of their appearance caught his eye; their inspiring notes ravished his ear; he rushed from his apartment to the street, joined in the crowd, banished his seriousness, and felt the strivings of the Spirit *no more*." This was all that Satan desired; since in gaining this he gained, and Lord Littleton lost, all. If the fly can only be attracted by its glare to circle round the flame until, intoxicated, it falls into it, its wings are lost; and, if not destroyed at once, it is destroyed inevitably. "I am a candidate for a fortune," said a young man recently in the flush of health and the ardour of hopeful prospects, "and I am bound to die rich!" Alas! within a year he was dead, and that too before he was rich either in earthly or in heavenly treasures.

Ah! thus it is that, while Christ and his bride the church stand in their very presence, beckoning them to heaven and holding forth the crown of an immortal heaven with its imperishable, eternal weight of glory,—thoughtless and blinded youth cast their all

upon a moment's die,—eternity, the prize of life, salvation through the blood of the Lamb;—and, Esau-like, barter every thing for baubles, "and buy only eternal pains!"

Of all others, therefore, young men stand in need of association,—of the power which is found in the example, influence, advice, encouragement, sympathy, companionship, and occupation which are so powerfully brought to bear upon them by association with those of their own age who have like passions, feelings, and temptations with themselves.

YOUTH THE CRISIS OF MAN'S CHARACTER AND DESTINY.

Youth is the crisis of a man's character,—the tide of life which, taken at its height, leads on, according to the power that moves it, to a life of glory and of goodness, or to one of shame, hard impenitence, and unbelief. Of the crimes of Great Britain, one-fourth are ascribed to parties under twenty-one years of age. In three years, eight hundred and thirty-three offenders under that age were committed to the Glasgow prison.

The number of criminals under twenty years of age, imprisoned in 1815, in Britain, was 6803, or 1 in 449 of the population between ten and twenty years of age; while in 1844 they amounted to 11,348, or 1 in 304 of the population of the same age.

In London, between the years 1844 and 1848, the proportion of criminals under twenty years of age to the population of the metropolis under that age increased from 1 in 56 to 1 in 47.

One leading question of the present age, therefore, is to know how to deal with juvenile delinquents.

THE NUMBER AND IMPORTANCE OF YOUNG MEN IN ANY COMMUNITY.

Such are the temptations of young men, and such the danger of their being lost to society, and of their becoming a curse instead of a blessing.

Now, there are probably not fewer than between two and three thousand young men in this city. They are essential to its very existence. There is not a store in this city which would not be closed but for the needful services of its young men; not a counting-house, not a workshop, not a printing-press, which would not be broken up if deprived of their vigorous and energetic young men. As principals, as bookkeepers, as clerks, as hands and operatives, men still endowed with the energy, enterprise, and strength of youth sustain and carry on the various busy operations of this and of every other mercantile community.

The character of any city, therefore,—of its business, its manufactures and its arts, depends on the character of the young men.

The permanence, prosperity, popularity, and profitable success of every mercantile concern depend vitally and to a very great extent upon the honesty, the address, the energy of the young men, upon the hearty zeal with which they enter into the interests of their employers, and upon the intelligence and pleasing and obliging manners with which they conduct themselves.

And hence it follows that the future progress and elevation of this and of any city, its prosperous rivalry with other cities in their rapid increase and development, depend more than any thing else—except the blessing of God, which alone maketh rich and buildeth up any community,—upon the wisdom, spirit, enterprise, large-hearted liberality, far-reaching sagacity, and therefore that fear of God which is the source of these virtues and of all true greatness, —which characterize its young men.

THE IMPORTANCE AND CLAIMS OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS.

Such, then, being the relation of young men to every community, (not now to refer to our families, to our social character, and to our churches,)—such being their supreme importance to its prosperity,—such being the peculiar circumstances which isolate young men as a class from those around them,—and such being the peculiar temptations by

which their virtue and pious purposes are assailed,—it is very evident that an association of young men on Christian principles is of unspeakable importance. The leaven which shall purify this mass must be mingled with it. The light that shall enlighten it must radiate from the centre outwards. And the all-pervading and elevating power of Christian principle must be brought to bear upon our young men through the sympathy and love of young men like themselves.

THE ADVANTAGES THEY SECURE TO YOUNG MEN.

The Young Men's Christian Association presents, therefore, very strong attractions to every Christian young man in the community. Would you, my dear young friend, strengthen and invigorate your own Christian life;—would you enjoy the blessedness of doing good,—good to those most needful of it, to whom you have peculiar access, over whom you have peculiar power, and in benefiting whom you most effectually advance the interests of society at large;—would you increase your own happiness and gather round you all the delight springing from sympathy and fellowship with kindred spirits;—would you secure to yourself friends, acquaintances, a home where you can cultivate both the head and the heart?—then become an active, zealous, and warm-hearted member of some Young Men's Christian Association.

ALL CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN OF EVERY DENOMINATION MAY UNITE.

No Christian man—who loves the gospel more than he does any creed of human origin, and Christ in his divine glory and grace and infinite all-sufficiency more than he does any denomination upon earth—need hesitate to unite in such association. It is simply, sincerely, and purely evangelical. It is not polemical nor aggressive in any sense except as against sin. It is neither sectarian, doctrinal, nor ecclesiastical. Its basis is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Its power is the practical, experimental, saving, and sanctifying knowledge of Christ formed in the heart the hope of glory. Its instrumentality is the gospel as the only regenerator of man individually and of man socially. The reception of that gospel, and love and devotion to that Saviour, are the only qualifications for union with such an Association. It knows no church in particular, except so far as membership in it gives evidence of these qualifications being possessed by its representatives. It looks beyond partieular churches to the church visible,—the holy catholic church throughout the world; and it looks upward above all rites and forms and peculiar tenets, as held and loved and deemed vitally important upon earth, to membership in the church spiritual and invisible,—consti-

tuted of all those who are born by a new celestial birth, whose names are written in heaven, whose aims and hopes and joys are one, and to whom it is a blessed privilege to labour together with Christ in seeking and saving the lost.

No one, therefore, need keep back. There is here no compromise of doctrine, order, or principle. To associate Christian young men; to strengthen and confirm their faith and hope and zeal; to provide comfortable rooms and reading, and perhaps physical refreshment* for young men generally whether they are professing Christians or not; to encourage their friendship; to aid and assist them in every way; to preserve and increase in them all good purposes; to deliver them from temptation; to present before them the example of living, loving, and cheerful piety, and thus to lead them by the cords of a man to the Saviour and salvation; to be ready, on any occasion of public sickness and calamity or of private and personal necessity, to lend their services to the cause of suffering humanity; and to devise and prosecute labours of Christian love among the young, the poor, and the destitute:—this is the sum and substance of the end contemplated by such an association.

Young Men's Christian Associations, therefore, have powerful and undisputed claims to the appro-

* To the extent of tea, coffee, butter and bread, as in London.

bation, encouragement, sympathy, and assistance of every member of the community; of every one to whom the character of our future husbands, fathers, and rulers is dear; especially of every man of business; and more emphatically still of every one who names the name of Christ.*

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* In this connection I would give what prominence and permanence I may to the following suggestion relative to city clerks and young men employed in similar ways. It is from the Presbyterian:—

"MESSRS. EDITORS:—A young gentleman, my relative, a clerk in New York, lately paid me a visit, and, among other matters, he informed me that he did not go statedly to church on the Sabbath, because he had no pew or seat, and was wholly unable from his little salary to rent one. He said, also, that very many clerks spent the whole Sabbath at home, and not a few of them in utter idleness and folly; that they could not afford to pay for seats, and, being very often '*looked*' out of pews, and not rarely turned out by the sextons and others, they had become bitter in their feelings against religious people, and wholly infidel in their sentiments.

"I cannot now write any thing elaborate on this matter, but would respectfully suggest whether our religious and moral merchants cannot devise a plan of renting seats or pews, and in pleasant parts of the churches, for their clerks and apprentices, requiring all such to attend worship on the Sabbath, and refusing to employ any who will not agree to such an arrangement."

"The foregoing is from a respected clerical brother, who states no imaginary case; nay, we have reason to apprehend it is but one of many similar cases. In our large cities there are thousands of apprentices and clerks who, from straitened

WHY THESE ASSOCIATIONS REQUIRE LIBERAL ASSISTANCE AND LARGE RESOURCES.

It is therefore very evident that Young Men's Christian Associations can only fully succeed by liberal help, as well as by the general sympathy and fervent prayers of the community at large.

Every Association ought to have a very com-

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means and want of friendly encouragement, have no connection with our churches. They are not only unable, however good their will might be, to purchase or to rent pews, but, feeling that a constant attendance at any place of worship would be regarded as an intrusion, they stay away, and become utterly indifferent to religion, or positively hostile to it, because its privileges can alone be purchased with money, which they cannot command. It is well worthy of consideration whether there is not a radical defect in the system which is now pursued, which, to so great an extent, excludes the worthy poor from our sanctuaries. Why should those who happen to have money be a privileged class, driving back into corners and galleries those in all moral and religious respects their superiors? And if this distinction cannot well be overlooked, why, at least, should not all our churches have interspersed, in the various aisles, pews well furnished for strangers, where they could feel as if they were not intruders? And why, as our correspondent suggests, should not employers rent pews for their clerks and apprentices, which would be amply repaid by the improved morals of these subordinates? Some remedy should be found for an evil which actually exists. Many young men who will become a disgrace to society by their vices might thus be rescued to be the future supports and ornaments of the church.—EDS. PRES."

fortable, spacious, well-aired and well-situated house, —A HOME. This building should be so arranged as to provide a convenient reading-room, well supplied with papers and one or more periodicals;—a sitting-room commodiously furnished and suitably aired and warmed;—a library supplied with fresh, attractive, and profitable books;—and a hall for social meetings, private lectures, essays and debates, Bible-classes, and for whatever other exercises may be suggested by a wise experience.

Every Association should have the means also of providing lectures from distinguished men in all parts of our country, and of publishing and circulating such lectures, addresses, or tracts as would be found useful to young men.

There is thus a necessity for means far beyond those hitherto provided, both for making such associations what they have not yet been, and for opening up to them ways of usefulness and sources of attraction not yet contemplated.

AN APPEAL TO MERCHANTS AND CITIZENS.

I appeal, then, on behalf of the Young Men's Christian Association among you, to every merchant and man of business in the community. Here is a way in which you may greatly benefit the young men of your adopted and cherished city;—at once please and profit them; encourage them to be and

to do good and to eschew evil; preserve and purify them; endear them to you, to each other, to their friends, families, and churches; stimulate them to intellectual and moral excellence, and to energy, perseverance, honesty, and honour; render them better men, better clerks, better salesmen, better cashiers, better agents, better creditors, and better merchants, better every way, whether as friends of your family, suitors to your daughters, husbands to your loved and cherished ones, fathers of your families, officers in your banks, directors in your railroad-companies, aldermen in your Council, and officers in your churches.

Would it then be too much to ask every merchant, every house of business, every man to whom the services and character of young men are important, if not every family and every Christian, to make an annual contribution to this association? In what other way could you do so much to advance your own interests as by encouraging young men to unite together in zealous co-operation for their own improvement;—by providing them with ample means for attracting others to their rooms, their meetings, their lectures, and their various churches;—by banding together those who, with energy, should also have the disposition to be zealously affected in every good work by which the health, happiness, and moral and spiritual improvement of the community may be promoted;—by thus elevating the

standard of character attainable and maintainable by young men;—by providing an increasing body of young men in whose honour, honesty, and energy, if not also in their piety, the community might repose confidence in any position of trustworthiness and zeal,—by thus rendering vice more vicious, immorality more degrading, gambling, drunkenness, extravagance and dishonesty in every form more disgraceful,—by demonstrating that true religion is identified with all that is honourable, manly, and noble in character, and that it is promotive of the highest interests and happiness of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come,—and that, in the language of an ancient proverb, there is a shame (the shame of being religious) which is sin, and truly shameful, whereas there is a shame (the shame of being sinful, irreligious, and cowardly and inactive in the cause of God) which is life and glory;—that voluntarily to eschew evil and avoid it, to choose good and pursue it, to make good our object and our end, and to live for others at the sacrifice of self and for the love of Christ, is the very essence of heroism; and that he who by shining acts marks out his ascending way is in the path of glory shining more and more unto the perfect day,—

> Still nearer heaven, still more and more divine
> Her mansions, as he nears the eternal shore.

Were our leading men of business to set an ex-

ample in this matter; allow to their young men their evenings for bodily recreation, and for mental, moral, and spiritual improvement; and encourage their attendance at the rooms and meetings and social unions of these Associations; what glorious results might we not look for in the future character and prosperity of our city, our families, and our churches!

WHY ALL CHRISTIANS, AND YOUNG MEN SPECIALLY, REQUIRE ASSOCIATION.

But, whatever may be the course pursued by others, let me encourage you, my young friends,—and all you who have strength and energy and spirit enough and love enough to Christ and to the souls of young men to unite with them in doing good,—to avail yourselves of the advantages of the Young Men's Christian Association.

It is, as I have shown, in its nature, principle, object, and instrumentality, CHRISTIAN,—generated, inspirited, and sustained by the divine life of Christianity. That life quickens in individuals the sense of responsibility, gratitude, and love to God and love to souls perishing around them. But it also enlightens and enlivens man's social nature, and leads him to seek encouragement, help, and strength in those who, like himself, are quickened and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. This is the instinct

and security of the Christian, whose life is now a warfare against sin within and temptation without.

And in the very woods around us may we not behold a lesson on the necessity of this union and co-operation? 'The branch cannot but wither that is cut from the parent vine.' The leaf depends for life upon its protecting stem. The young and tender and even the hardy trees find protection from the stormy blast and the biting frost in their congregated union. And the elements that are needed to cherish life in one tree are provided by another, so that they minister to each other's comfort, sustenance, and life. And wouldst thou, O Christian, be a dweller in the woods of human life,—whether you stand in the crowded mart of commerce, in the shady grove of domestic and social life, or among the cedars of Lebanon, the garden of the Lord where trees of righteousness are planted by the rivers of living water,—and yet think to dwell alone in selfish independence? "Behold, the beasts shall hurt thee, weak, naked, houseless outcast. Disease and death shall track thee out as bloodhounds in the wilderness." Or, if thou standest, thou shalt be found a poor, weak, and broken reed, shaken by every wind and bared by every rude blast. Thou hast a social spirit, O, man. Alone, thou dreadest and wantest all things. Thy strength and comfort are laid up for thee in the deep well of humanity. Bless God, therefore, who

has ordained for you the ties of family, of kindred, of country, and, above all, of Christian fellowship; and who has thus multiplied your resources, out of weakness has made you strong, and supplied all your need from the storehouse of sympathy and friendship and the sweet communion of saints.

Christian fellowship is therefore absolutely necessary to Christian life, comfort, and growth. We are indeed dependent creatures. We cannot exist alone. We live in each other's life, and are moulded by each other's character, opinions, habits, and disposition. Sympathy creates a moral atmosphere through which we are assimilated and fashioned by those associated with us. So God has made us. So experience teaches us, for a man is known by his company. And so God instructs us, for "evil communication corrupts good manners, while he that walketh with the wise shall be wise."

The reason is very obvious. We are dependent on the good will and good opinion of those associated with us. How—asks the divine philosophy—can two or more persons walk together in the bonds of intimate and familiar acquaintance unless they are agreed? There will of necessity be constant differences, jarring, and ill feeling. To avoid this, to be at peace, to walk and work and will and enjoy together, we feel constrained to conform ourselves to those with whom we wish to associate as intimate companions. There is a mutual and grow-

ing assimilation, first by the avoiding, and then by the abandoning, of all points of difference.

Example, too, is all-powerful. It exhibits the thing done. It makes manifest its reality and its practicability. If evil, example seems to guarantee safety, satisfaction, the good-will of those who assume to be manly, independent, and above the dictation of God or man. If good, example on the other hand commands our homage, condemns our low, sensual, and irrational life, and gives us a living proof that true piety is the only source of true dignity, honour, happiness, and peace. And whereas an evil example is congenial to our naturally-evil heart of unbelief, and is commended to us by all the witchery and devices of the Evil One, on the other hand conscience, experience, observation, the Bible, and the providence of God,—God himself, good angels, good men, and good women in an eminent degree,—conspire with good example in making it powerful to good impressions and to holy and happy results.

ASSOCIATION ONLY POWERFUL WHEN VOLUNTARY.

It is, however, very important for me to observe, and for you to remember, that the power of association lies chiefly in its being voluntarily sought and willingly reciprocated. The association even of the wicked, the profane, the drunken, the irreligious, and the scoffer, when it is only endured because of the necessity of circumstances,—as, for instance, in

the prosecution of business, in the case of impenitent parents, husband, wife, family, or school-fellows,—may even serve to awaken disgust; to unveil the heinousness, the meanness, and the vulgarity of sin; to create aversion and loathing; to arouse our spirit of independence; and to generate principles of virtue and habits of piety:—

> Gathering strength and beauty from the storm,
> The unyielding oak grows to majestic form,
> Strengthening its root deep hidden from the view,
> Feeding on air, and drinking heavenly dew.
> Thus habits mould the soul to be a place
> Wherein may dwell forms of immortal grace,
> While thoughts and tempers in the spirit's shrine
> Grow into shape and take the form divine,
> Fed by the life of the celestial tree,
> And drinking heaven,—elastic, stainless, free.

Thus were Moses and Daniel prepared by God for the bravest services in his cause far from the pious homes of Israel. They grew in saintship amid the impurities and effeminacy of a heathen palace. Josiah also took root and blossomed into an early and fragrant piety amid all the blood and filth and pollution of the house of his father Ammon and his grandfather Manasseh. "I have never doubted," said Newton, "that God could convert the heathen, since he converted me."

It is only, therefore, when we choose the sinner's company, walk willingly in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat

of the scornful, that their character and curse become inevitably ours.

But this is equally true of the example and association of the pious and the good. We may enjoy this inestimable blessing in the person of our parents, family, and friends,—in a husband, or a wife, or a child, or an employer, or a business-companion. But if we do not appreciate it,—if it is not really and voluntarily and lovingly improved,—it not only does us no good, but oftentimes is perverted into a curse. Our pride and vanity and self-will and contrary dispositions and desires are offended; and so sin, taking advantage of us, works in us hatred and enmity and unbelief and hardness and impenitency of heart.

The power of association lies, therefore, in its being voluntarily sought, and in our thus putting into the hands of others the key to our hearts and submitting them to the plastic power of example and companionship. And when therefore young persons voluntarily turn away from any willing intimacy and heart-communion with the vile and ungodly, and associate themselves with those to whom Christianity is truth; Christ the perfection of glory as a model of character; piety the highest style of man; the service of God perfect freedom; and godliness the chiefest joy;—when, I say, young men or women thus voluntarily join themselves together, they give to association all its mighty power to mould and fashion the character and life into

conformity with the true, the beautiful, and the good.

How pleasant, therefore, and how good a thing, it is to see the young men of our different churches, and young men not yet members of any church, associated together in these societies! May you dwell together in unity amid the green pastures and the living waters of the common salvation, no root of bitterness springing up to trouble you;—the herdsmen of Lot having no contention with those of Abraham; Ephraim not vexing Judah nor Judah Ephraim; and the only strife being to provoke one another to love and to zeal in every good word and work!

CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN URGED BY GRATITUDE TO PIETY, ZEAL, AND DEVOTION.

And as Christ's love alone can unite his children, —as Christ's Spirit alone can "pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which we are nothing worth, and without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before God,"—let a sense of your own infinite indebtedness to Christ's mercy keep you ever near to his throne of grace, that he may ever keep you near to himself, and shed abroad his own love and the love of the Spirit, and all the fruits of the Spirit, in your heart.

When you look back to the hole of the pit from

which you were hewed out, and consider how after being made a living stone you were built by the finger of God into that noiseless temple which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;—when you call to mind how, amid the fretful circumstance of passing time, weary and heavy-laden and tossed about by every vain distracting care, Christ called you by his still small voice into a mountain apart, and there amid the unearthly calm of his own blessed presence spake peace and rest to your troubled soul;—when you remember how, while you lay in your blood, polluted, an outcast foundling, abandoned by all earthly pity,—

> He bathed thee erst in life's eternal fount,
> And took thee through the gate of his own grave
> Unto the haunts of the celestial mount,
> With dews of life thy dying soul to lave;—

when, I say, you think upon these things, you will be ready to exclaim—

> Ye shining ones that walk on heaven's high wall,
> Look down; behold me from your heights around;
> Come, see and hear, bear witness to my call!
> What miracle of mercy have ye found
> Equal to mine?—With sins encompass'd round,
> A lonely exile in the vale of tears,
> One struggling 'mid the rocks, his comrades drowned,
> An unarm'd one travelling 'mid hostile spears,
> With such an one to walk the Almighty Lord appears.
> Me hath he called to love him; me hath he deign'd
> To call his child; for me his life-blood pour'd;
> And when I turn from him, then he is pain'd.

To all things else his all-constraining word
Sets bounds, and o'er them throws his holding cord
But to our love: He asks our being whole.
And who unto the soul can bounds afford?
He who can all the infinite control
Alone can meet her love, alone can fill the soul.
I ask not wealth; I ask not length of days,
Nor joys which home and rural sights bestow,
Nor honour among men, nor poets' praise,
Nor friendship, nor the light of love to know,
Which with its own warm sun bathes all below;
Nor that the seed I sow should harvest prove;
I ask not health, nor spirit's gladdening flow,
But an assured pledge of rest above,—
A heart to feel and recompense Thy love
By loving Thee all earthly things above.

THE POWER OF ASSOCIATION EXERCISED BY BOOKS, ETC. AS MUCH AS BY PERSONS.

Let me, before passing from this point, remind you, my young friends, that the power of association is, to a very great extent, exercised by the dead as well as by the living; by the absent as well as by the present; by those you have never seen as well as by those in whose society you live and move; by books, by pictures, by music, and by all our in-door and out-door amusements and occupations.

Much, if not the greater part, of man's association in this day of general knowledge and cultivation is found in the silent companionship of the books and newspapers with which he daily communes, and in all

the other employments of his daily life. These constitute much more truly his associates, and exercise over him a much more powerful influence, than his living companions. This is the atmosphere in which he really lives and moves and has his being, and which, all the more powerfully because all the more unconsciously, creates and sustains his peculiar taste, temperament, opinions, and habits.

This is a point of unspeakable importance to the young, and yet but little considered. Young men, it has been said, are like the chameleon. They take their colour from the objects with which they are brought in contact, be they personal or material. They have as yet no character of their own, fixed and immovable; and being, like sheep, gregarious, they readily yield to the impulse of any leader and follow a multitude to do evil. Now, it is in books that this communion of soul is most intimate, unreserved, absolute. Continents and centuries present no obstacle to such intercourse. Time and space are annihilated by this mental and moral association. Man walks continually in the presence and under the influence of those who have drawn him to their silent society and by the irresistible attraction of their powerfully-entrancing witchery of style and tragic story. Thoughts that would kindle a blush of shame if uttered, scenes which would shock by their abominable shamelessness if witnessed, actions which he would condemn as equally dis-

honourable and degrading, and principles which he has been taught to regard as impious and profane, a man may allow to pass before the eye of his mind, to enter the ear of the soul, and to awaken spiritual impressions, perceptions, and feelings. And thus, in the confidence of his own personal morality and uprightness, a man may permit visions of hell to be daguerreotyped upon his heart, and leaven of corruption to mingle with the very elements of his being:—

Youth, confident in self, tampereth with dangerous dalliance,
Till the vice his heart once hated has lock'd him in her foul embrace.

The power of God's moral government over such a man is by this silent and unobserved process destroyed, and the soul-inspiring ideas of God, eternity, heaven, and hell, being eclipsed, the heart becomes insensible to every pure and holy motive, because the light and love and power of the gospel are effectually shut out from the darkened soul. The citadel is undermined before alarm is given. While the man sleeps, tares are sown and soon spring up to choke the better seed. And while he lies slumbering in dreamy self-indulgence on the lap of this Delilah, his hair is shorn, his strength is gone from him, and he walks forth as at other times into the midst of temptation, not knowing that God has departed from him. Satan having entered into his heart, finds that instead of resisting he becomes an easy prey, a

willing captive, a degraded bondsman, submitting, by a self-entailed compulsion, the whole man to low, sensual, and grovelling pleasures and pursuits.

THE EXPLANATION OF A MYSTERY.

This is the secret of that mystery which often meets us in the world, when there is some sudden and unlooked-for development of vice, crime, or ungodliness in the life of some man or woman whose outward conduct, associations, and professions were all hitherto irreproachable; and why also it is that so many live in impenitency and unbelief against all the likelihoods from parental piety and instruction, of their early conversion and consecration to God.

Their secret associations have been with books, pictures, and papers which feed the ungodliness and sinful carnality of their natural hearts. Their indoor, inward life has been one of vanity and fictitious demoralizing worldliness. They have thus been living in an atmosphere of sin, and generating the streams of a growing sensuality, carnal-mindedness, and practical atheism, until the pent-up waters at length burst forth in some open development of the iniquity which had long been accumulating in the heart. The poisonous malaria which had so long been secretly inhaled has vitiated the very life-blood of their moral constitution, so that, set on fire of hell, raging with the fever of sensuality or of vice in

some other form, and burning with the insatiable thirst of impetuous desire, they rush like a frenzied patient from the restraints of home, and plunge headlong into crime, dissipation, or dishonourable courses. The fire-damp long and secretly generated has permeated the recesses of the soul, and only needed the spark of temptation to develop it in an explosion of terrible, consuming flames,—

> Must it be so because
> I did not scowl temptation from my presence,
> Dallied with thoughts of possible fulfilment,
> And only kept the road, the access open?
> I but amused myself with thinking of it.
> The free will tempted me,—the power to do
> Or not to do it. Was it criminal
> To make the fancy minister to hope?
> Where am I? Whither have I been transported?
> No road, no track behind me, but a wall
> Impenetrable, insurmountable,
> Rises obedient to the thoughts I mutter'd
> But meant not! Mine own doings tower behind me!
> A punishable man I seem: the guilt,
> Try what I will, I cannot roll from off me.

Thus is it that without going into the open ways of sin, the course of this world, or into the haunts of vice; without seeking in the theatre a provocation to lust and intemperance; and without going hand-in-hand with the openly ungodly and profane; young men—ay, and young women too—are often led by secret passages down to the pit of destruction,

become assimilated in feeling, thought, and character with those from whose contamination they once shrank; and are thus prepared to riot with greediness in that uncleanness, the very thought of which would once have been repelled as disgusting and diabolical.

CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN EARNESTLY IMPLORED TO SEEK THE SALVATION OF OTHERS.

Christian young man, whosoever thou art that readest this appeal, when you remember that you

> From that dark prison-house
> Once pass'd, and, from Egyptian bondage freed,
> Wast led between the walls of hanging seas;—

that you too have wandered on the edge of death,—

> Of death that dieth not,—of endless death,—
> And drunk the intoxications of the cup
> Which fill'd your fancy with unreal joys;—

and when you consider that these, your companions in age, in nature, and in destiny, are on every side and in every way surrounded by temptations and snares and "damnable delusions," while yet, in awful infatuation and cased in self-confidence, they are treading on the verge of never-ending woe and abusing to their greater condemnation their brief life "big with the fate of all eternity;"—oh, will you not run to their relief?

A few years since, says a writer in the Ame-

rican Messenger,—a very powerful auxiliary to those who would do good,—as with others I was detained for some hours on the shore of one of our inland lakes by an accident upon a railroad, I witnessed an incident which deeply affected me. Near where we lingered, impatient of delay, there was a deep, wide, and very rapid stream, whose waters roared and foamed and plunged over the rocks into the lake. In this perilous current there was suddenly discovered, as we sat listlessly gazing, *a human form*, apparently lifeless, and rapidly moving along with the flood just at its entrance into the lake. Quick as thought the party were astir; but before the older men could adopt a plan for a rescue, one of our number, a young man of slender form but of a large heart, plunged into the hurrying waters and struck out in pursuit of their victim. It was a desperate struggle. Those who watched it from the shore were almost paralyzed as they gazed. But at length the struggle terminated in the triumph of the daring young man. Like one determined to do his best, he laid hold on the object of his exertions, and slowly made his way with his burden to the shore, where, amid the shouts of the spectators, he at length laid it down. The drowned man, to all appearance dead, after long and persevering effort to restore him, proved to be alive, and, before we left the place, spoke, stood up, and walked about in our presence.

This incident suggested to my mind, says the writer, such thoughts as these :—

That noble-spirited young man saved a *body* from death. But there are *souls* exposed to an infinitely more dreadful death, rapidly passing down the perilous current of time, and every moment nearing the awful ocean of eternity. Who shall go to the rescue? Old men will counsel and do what they can; but many of them lack the strength and energy for quick and enterprising exertion. Who then are so suitable as our strong young men to plunge into the stream and buffet the waves and lay hold upon the perishing?

Again: if our young men will but make the effort to save the lost, and are successful even in a single instance, they will enjoy not only the approbation of their own consciences and the gratitude of the rescued one, but those shouts of joy over one sinner that repenteth which echo from the heavenly shores. Let such a young man know that he "who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a *soul* from death and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Nor this alone. In saving one soul, you save many; for one sinner destroyeth many good. A drowning man will drag down, if he can, others with him. A wicked man cannot live alone. He must have company. He must join hand with hand and take

counsel together with those willing to be seduced or who are more hardened than himself:—

> With mimic joy and fiendish guile
> They on their victim smile:
> One blindly tears life's charter'd scroll,
> And tramples on the sword;
> Another bears the inebriating bowl,
> Or whate'er price they need who sell their Lord;
> While folly laughs, to gain the heart and head
> Of those who dream of life while they embrace the dead.

In the expressive language of Scripture, sinners "hatch cockatrice's eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." The sinner thus hopes to hide himself in a crowd, to divide the risk, to parcel out the criminality, and to bribe and blind conscience to be silent. And hence it is not only true that a companion of fools shall be destroyed, but also that fools will destroy their companions. In saving one sinner, therefore, you withdraw one partner from the conspiracy. His influence and power for evil are destroyed. The crowd is diminished, and fear and shame act with redoubled power on his startled comrades. Sinners are afraid. Fearfulness hath surprised them.

And, further still, every soul rescued is a friend, a co-worker gained. He is added to your ranks. He is enlisted in your company. He fights under

your banner, and is now ready and zealous for every good work.

In him, too, you have your mightiest argument, your most overwhelming proof; an irresistible appeal; a living exemplification of the possibility and the blessedness of salvation; an epistle which all can see and read; one whom all knew as blind and lame and dumb, now restored to sight, leaping, and praising God who hath done such wonderful things for him; a silent but persuasive demonstration of the reality and glory of piety—

> That, could it meet the thoughtful gaze of men,
> Would fill the eyes with tears, the breath with sighs,
> Like rain and winds upon the stagnant lake,
> And so amend the heart.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE POWER OF CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN.

And this God can make your efforts accomplish. Let Christian young men bethink them of their mission and their power. "I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." In you "God has ordained strength, that he may still the enemy and avenger."

In the recent terrible calamity occasioned by the burning of the steamer John Jay, on Lake George, when in one half hour she was burned to the water's edge and all on board were driven into the

water, among the most active in rescuing passengers was a lad of seventeen, named William Burnet, belonging to Ticonderoga. He dived down six times and saved a number of passengers. He was at last so overcome by his indefatigable exertions as to be delirious during the night. Three young gentlemen of Philadelphia,—Messrs. Hutchinson,—who very early stripped themselves to their underclothes, after saving their father and three sisters, were, by their energy and advice, instrumental in saving many others. They behaved with great coolness and confidence. Such, also, is your power, your trust, your solemn charge, Christian young men. For amid the daily scenes and intercourse of life, as you go out and come in, as you travel and when you rest, at home and abroad, in the counting-house and the family circle, in the street and alley, and in the rolling car or the winged steamer, you may find opportunities of doing good. And thus also, amid the too frequent storms and wrecks of life, may you become the deliverer of the perishing, the praise of the living, and yourself doubly blessed as you see some mother clasping and kissing over and over again her rescued boy plucked from her arms by the destroying waves of temptation, and gone, she feared, hopelessly and forever; or, while you cheer some almost lifeless and self-ruined youth with hopes of mercy, and clinging to him with the grasp of a love stronger than death, bear him safely to the shore. Cling to

him; yes, grasp him with a yet holier, more agonizing hope and prayer and confidence. Imitate that heroic woman on board the Northern Indiana, which was also recently destroyed by fire,—Mrs. Fowler. Having made her husband put on the only remaining life-preserver, and tearing away her bonnet already in flames, she plunged with him into the lake. When they rose to the surface she wiped the water from his mouth and eyes and encouraged him to retain his hope of being saved. He continued to struggle with the waves. Half an hour elapsed, and there were no signs of assistance. His strength was rapidly failing. His wife, observing it, tried all the more to cheer him. He said he could not stand it any longer; it seemed as though he must give up. At that moment she heard a steamer coming rapidly through the water. "My dear husband," she said, "a few moments more and we are safe. Don't you hear a boat coming?" He said he did, and, immediately reviving, made all the effort in his power, and struggled for himself and his heroic wife until the "Mississippi" came up and took them, with scores of others, on her commodious decks. Thus, also, my young Christian friend, throw around your perishing brother the life-preserving promises of the gospel; thus convince him that your heart's desire and prayer is that he may be saved; thus wipe from his eyes the tears of despondency; thus smile away the gloom of hopeless despair; and, as the sound of mercy comes from the

blessed gospel, point him to the life-boat of salvation hasting to his deliverance, and urge him with one last desperate effort to lay hold of the rope thrown out for his salvation, and to cast himself into the arms of Him who stands ready to receive and to save him in his uttermost extremity.

In the "Messenger" for February was an account of the happy death of a young man who was brought to Christ through the divine blessing upon a faithful pencil-note handed him by a youthful stranger in the cars between Princeton and New York. The request of bereaved friends to hear from the writer of the note has been answered.

On the evening of the first day of February, a young merchant of New York, being in New Orleans on business, dropped into the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association of that city, after having addressed the boys of the city workhouse. Taking up the "Messenger" for February, he was looking over it, when two strangers entered, whom he approached as he would in the rooms of the Society in New York, of which he is an active member. He entered into conversation with one of them, whom he was on the point of asking whether he was a Christian, and if not if he did not expect to be, when his eye fell on *the very words* in the article, "Railroad Letter."

"I had not," he wrote to a friend, "read over five lines when I dropped the paper:—Is it possible that

my query to that strange youth I sat with in the cars has got into the paper? I read on, and immediately felt that I had been the instrument, in God's hand, of converting a soul. Oh, what joy! I never knew till then what pleasure it would be to be conscious of being the means of saving an immortal soul. I retired to my room to thank God for his goodness in showing me some result to feeble efforts in his cause. I have prayed often that I might have this privilege here on earth; and now God has in his own good time, and by such ways as to him seemed best, revealed to me for my encouragement that we do not—yea, cannot—sow in vain."

What a blessed reward has this young Christian experienced from his labours for Christ, in the joy of that happy hour! May not every Christian in whose heart there is an earnest love for souls hope for like sources of joy either in this or in the better world? Would that the inquiry in his letter might lead many to the action it suggests! "If a few words may do so much good, by the blessing of God, oh, why do we not oftener speak them in humble faith?"

Lagging hours, that seem to linger,
Yet may thus each have a finger,
Pointing wandering souls to heaven.
And thus, while lengthening shades of even
On life's dial fall, and now
Darker shadows round thee go,

Yet thy works may pass before,
Waiting thee,—a blessed store!—
In their number, weight, and measure,
Laid up in enduring treasure.

CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN MUST EXEMPLIFY CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

To such labours of love and faith and prayer you are summoned by the common feelings of humanity which prompt to pity and compassion for all who are in danger and distress, and this all the more powerfully if they are in such circumstances as we ourselves have known by bitter experience to be imminently hazardous. But Christianity,—embodying the example of Christ, his love, his mercy, his blood and righteousness, his humility and infinite condescension, his sufferings and death, his example of self-denying sacrifice for lost, guilty, ungrateful men,—this demands from you not only pity, but also mercy. If you only pity the suffering, if you only weep with those that weep tears of agony, and mourn with those who mourn the loss of all that was dear to them, what do ye more than others? Do not even the Gentiles, the ungodly, men everywhere, the same? This is humanity. It is natural affection. It proves that you are a man. But to be a Christian—to have the Spirit of Christ, to do as Christ did, to feel as Christ felt, to love as Christ loved, and to do good as Christ did good—you must exhibit more than this. You must not only

exercise compassion, but mercy. You must consider men as sinners, guilty, undone, depraved, polluted, unthankful, selfish, sensual, enemies of God and therefore of God's children, loving darkness rather than light, proud, scornful, and not only neglecters but rejecters of the gospel. You must be prepared to receive evil for good, railing for entreaty, cursing for blessing, coldness for condescension, hatred for love, threatening for forbearance, and all manner of evil ungenerously and without cause heaped upon you. This is what you are to expect from sinners. Such is the sad working of sin. Such were you and I. Such are all men in their conduct towards God whom they contemn, towards Christ whom they will not have to reign over them, and towards the ever-blessed Spirit whom they "resist" and "grieve" and "quench" and even "blaspheme." Such was the treatment given to our Lord, who came to his own but they received him not, who was maligned, traduced, betrayed, falsely accused, tried, and condemned, and by wicked hands crucified and slain. And yet his life was a life of mercy. His death was a sacrifice of mercy. His resurrection was an ascension to the throne of mercy, that as a Prince and a Saviour he might there ever live to give repentance and remission of sins, to dispense grace and mercy, and to reconcile, regenerate, restore, and glorify even his enemies and persecutors.

This world, this life, this gospel, every thing around us, are full of Christ's mercies. They meet us at every turn. They are in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the health we enjoy, the capacities we exercise, the opportunities of business we possess, and in the means of living and of supplying our rational desires and delights of which through grace we are possessed. Yea, it is owing to this mercy we are permitted to live and move and have our being, so that the very strength with which sinners sin and rebel and crucify him afresh and put him to an open shame is from the mercy of Christ. Mercy is everywhere. Here she runs to meet the returning prodigal, and opens her arms to fold him to her bosom. Here she pleads with sinners and pronounces pardon over the chief of them. Here she weeps with guilty sufferers and dries the tear upon sorrow's cheek. "And here, eyeing the storm, she launches her lifeboat through the foaming breakers, and pulls for the wreck where souls are perishing. It is her blessed hand which rings the Sabbath bell, and her voice which on savage shores or from Christian pulpits proclaims the Saviour for the lost. None she despises. She despairs of none. And, not to be scared away by the foulest sin, she stands by its guilty bed, and, bending down to death's cold ear,—when the twelfth hour is just about to strike,—she looks into the glassy eye and cries, 'Believe, oh, believe! only believe! for whosoever believeth in the Lord

Jesus Christ shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

Such is Christ, and such should every Christian be. Such is mercy,—that divine quality which characterizes Christians as "a peculiar people." And let it be remembered that Christ fulfilled and finished his incarnate mission of mercy while still a young man according to the flesh, and that Christ associated with himself—in his labours of love, and in his self-denials and self-sacrifices, his patience, perseverance, and well-doing—young men. To such he gave his commission and intrusted the interests of his cause. And to them are we indebted for the establishment, progress, and perpetuity of the church. From their ranks came forth the army of martyrs, the innumerable multitude of confessors, and the great cloud of witnesses in every age. Such, then, as Christ was, such as his apostles and martyrs were, such ought every young man to be. Such, dear reader, ought you to be. Let no man then despise thy youth. Despise and neglect it not yourself. Make Christ your model. Press toward the mark for the prize of your high calling in Christ Jesus. Go thou and do likewise. "Let the same mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus. For, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," since the love of Christ constraineth all that are Christ's to live not unto themselves, but unto him, and to follow him in seeking to save the lost.

If indeed you would be either known or felt in the world, live not unto yourself. Live for others, or you will be passed by the crowd, as they hurry on, unnoticed and unfelt. You will be left upon the drifting waters, like the useless weed, the rotten branch, or the leaky, dismantled, and abandoned hulk. The world has no use for you unless you are of use to it. It knows you not, cares not for you, unless it is to growl at you because you are in its way, or rail at you because you are an idle drone in the busy hive. The world feels the power of none, heeds none, praises none, honours none, and rewards none, but those who live and labour and do profitable service for it. Slumber and take your ease, and you will be left to do so, while the cars roll on and all opportunity and occasion for doing good in your day and generation has been passed by forever. And, as it is in the world, so also is it in the kingdom of heaven; for here also no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for it is only to him whose life is Christ—that is, devotion to Christ's service in the salvation of souls—is "death gain." The true Christian, therefore, whether he lives, lives unto the Lord, or whether he dies, dies unto the Lord; whether he lives, therefore, or dies, he is the Lord's.

But continued as well as energetic exertion is necessary in order to be useful to others and healthy and happy yourself. To loiter is to be passed and

left behind in the race. To relax is to enfeeble And to make your impressions and produce noticeable effect, and then leave them, is to write characters on the sand, which the next wave that rolls by will forever obliterate. Enter, then, on your life of holy devotion and your work of Christian zeal, with all the strength of youth and with all the determination of will to persevere; that is, as the converted Hottentot said, take right hold:—hold on: and never let go. And to whatever age and stage of life and of Christian life you may arrive, let this still be your motto. Persevere. Be not weary in well-doing. You will never be too old to do good, nor have accomplished so much as not to be stimulated, for your own good and your Saviour's glory, to be "fruitful even unto old age." Washington was ready even in advanced age to buckle on his armour and meet the call and the enemies of his country; and the hero of Lundy's Lane is also the hero of Chapultepec.

"Wear out, then; don't rust out. 'Why don't you give up business?' said a millionaire's friend, one day. 'You are getting old, and have made enough to retire on.' 'I'd rather wear out than rust out,' was the answer; 'and I must do one of the two. If I give up business now, after having been habituated to it for forty years, I shall die in a twelvemonth or two from sheer inaction. I shall rust out. I cannot do worse by keeping on. No! let me die,

as the stout knights of old used to say, with the harness on my back.'

"And he was right. Merely as a question of health, the retiring from business of active men, who have been all their lives accustomed to it, is a serious blunder. More have died in consequence of it, as sagacious physicians know, than have increased their happiness,—unless, indeed, they have substituted the work of man-making for the work of money-making, and labour for love of souls and of Christ instead of labouring for filthy lucre's sake. Nature, in fact, wars on idleness. There is not an atom in creation that is long at rest. The rain of to-day was vapour of yesterday, and that, a week ago, was water in the Pacific. The winds maintain forever a circulation of fresh air, without which vegetables and animals alike would die. No man, however wealthy, has a right to rust out. He violates the laws of his being if he attempts it. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to comfort the widow and orphan in their affliction, is part of the heaven-appointed duty of those who have equally money and leisure at their disposal. Wealth and retirement are not bestowed for riotous living or slothful indulgence. He who sits down, after having acquired a fortune, to spend his days in selfish gratification, literally rusts out soul as well as body. True manhood spurns such a cowardly retreat from the great battle of life as much as the hero would

scorn to be found engaged in dalliance when victory was turning against his country. It is only cravens who wish to die on silken beds. The brave prefer to fall with their armour on and their faces to the foe. Wear out! don't rust out!"

"He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him, saith the First and the Last, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on that stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. And I will give him the morning star. The same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will confess his name before my Father and the holy angels. And I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. And I will grant him to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne."

Wouldst thou the life of souls discern?
Love is life's only sign.
The spring of the regenerate heart,
The pulse, the glow of every part,
Is the true love of Christ our Lord,
In works and not in words adored.
Then we begin to love indeed;
When, from our sin and bondage freed
By this all-powerful Friend,
We follow him from day to day,
Assured of grace through all the way,
And glory at the end.

YOUTH IS FRUITFUL OF EXPEDIENTS.

In thus following Christ you will be aided by your youth, not only because it is strong, but also because it is fruitful of inventions and plans. It will suggest a thousand ways for the better accomplishment of the work of the Lord than perhaps any method of doing good now employed; or, at least, for securing the same results by novel, striking, and attractive agencies. It will be instant in season and out of season. It will not weary in well-doing. It will sow the good seed in the morning and in the evening not withhold its hand, and this, too, beside all waters and along every wayside, not knowing which shall prosper,—this or that. It will spend and be spent, and gather strength from toil, being fervent in spirit serving the Lord, and counting it meat and drink to do his will.

YOUTH IS ALSO BOLD AND ENERGETIC.

Youth also is dauntless, bold as a lion, not fearing the face of man, ready to give to every man a reason of the hope that is in him, and to contend earnestly for the faith,—if needs be, even unto blood. Only let this courage be tempered with discretion, so that you may be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, becoming all things to all men, hoping all things and bearing all things, if by any means you

may save some,—catching them with a heavenly guile, drawing them by the cords of a man or plucking them as brands from the burning. "Seeing therefore ye have this ministry, ye faint not."

Thus, nor the hills and vales that breathe of heaven,
And vines, and setting suns, and rays of even,
Alone speak God's blest language; but the walls
Of crowded cities echo back his calls,
Heard sweetly amid rude suburban cells,
And thickly-peopled towns, where Penury dwells.
There, haply, some fond parent's aching breast
Looks for a long-lost child in sad unrest,
Watching the distance in his lone abode,
Where opes the window to the mountain road.
Oh, haste to meet the wanderer on the wild,
Till Justice yields to Mercy reconciled.
With yearning heart oh breathe celestial love,
Melting with mercy such as dwells above,
That, while sad Memory racks with guilty fears,
Thy heart-appealing love may move his tears,
And urge to rise and seek that Father's face
Who hastes to grasp him in his fond embrace.

WHAT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS HAVE ALREADY DONE.

Already these associations have done much, and have devised many unpractised, if not unthought-of, ways and walks of usefulness. They are now found in the lanes and streets and thoroughfares of our cities, gathering the outcast ragged children into schools, visiting the sick and the dying, the father-

less and the widow, and, by tracts and books and lectures, carrying the gospel to every house and hovel and garret and chamber. "Like a sunbeam passing undefiled through the foulest atmosphere," they are seen labouring in Christian purity and love where the basest of the race are perishing, not shrinking from their loathsome guilt, but, with Jesus' pity and Jesus' tears, offering to the very chief of sinners the cup of salvation, the bread of life, the manna of heaven, the living water, and the healing balm.

Under their auspices we find out-door preaching in the streets or parks or commons of some of our large cities.* They have given rise also to many valu-

* PREACHING ON BOSTON COMMON.—Yesterday afternoon, says the "Traveller" of Monday, the 21st instant, at six o'clock, Rev. Dr. Kirk, of this city, preached to an audience of about three thousand people, in Yale's mammoth tent, which was spread for the purpose on the Common, near the pond. The services were the same as those usually practised in our churches; and the discourse which the reverend preacher delivered, from the text furnished in the parable of the Prodigal Son, was well conceived for such an audience, and was most attentively and respectfully hearkened to. Out-door preaching having thus proved a success, we learn that the Young Men's Christian Association, under whose auspices this was conceived, will have further services conducted on next Sunday afternoon, at which the Right Rev. Bishop Eastburn will officiate.

The "Christian Witness and Church Advocate" (Episcopal) says of this movement:—"We are glad to learn that a successful commencement of out-door preaching was made in this city last Sunday under the auspices of the Young Men's Chris-

able series of public lectures to young men. And by their annual conferences they are now converging into one centre the light and heat, the enterprise and experience, of all affiliated societies, and giving the best opportunity for awakening and diffusing the spirit of ever-widening charity.

This may, and we trust will, lead to the publication of a weekly paper or monthly magazine, specially devoted to the wants of young men, and opening up a channel by which sanctified talent and holy zeal may communicate the inspirations of their heaven-taught souls to their brethren, and provoke them to still greater love and zeal and devotion.*

On a recent journey to the mountains of Virginia, I heard everywhere, as I passed along, complaints of long-continued and destructive drought; and parched fields, clouds of dust, and thin-eared, withering crops, gave melancholy proof of the sad

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tian Association. Rev. Mr. Kirk preached, at six o'clock in the afternoon, to an audience of about three thousand people, in Yale's mammoth tent, which was spread for the purpose on the Common, near the pond. On next Sunday afternoon we are informed that there will be service at the same hour. We do not know who will officiate. This is a good movement; and we hope it will bring multitudes to hear the gospel who are now living as if its glad tidings had never sounded upon our earth."

* This, we find, is already initiated in the Quarterly Reporter, under the direction of the Central Committee, at Cincinnati, Ohio.

truth. But scarcely had I reached the mountains before the clouds began to gather from all quarters and to accumulate their combined vapours in one general mass, so thick and heavy as to darken the mid-day sun and encompass our very dwellings like the curtains of night. The winds soon rallied their forces. The lightnings commenced their brilliant and glorious display of terrific power and grandeur. And, as the artillery of heaven, like salvos of cannon in honor of some great victory, announced the approach of Him who thundereth marvellously with his voice and directeth his lightning unto the ends of the earth, the heavens poured down, far and wide, a copious and fertilizing rain.

And just such for years had been the condition and complaint of the Christian world. Fields dry and barren, and "nigh unto cursing," lay everywhere, in waste sterility, beneath a heaven impenetrable as brass, and fast becoming hard as iron. Faithful and believing hearts everywhere bewailed in secret places the gloomy and insensible condition of the church, and earnestly besought the Lord of the harvest to send forth the wind of his Spirit, and the dew and rain of his life-giving presence. Soon a small cloud was seen in the western horizon. Other clouds were attracted by it, and united with it, until they spread themselves over the eastern horizon also. To drop the figure, Christian young men in the heart of London were awakened to the claims of

perishing young men around them, and, unnoticed and unknown, united themselves for prayer and mutual encouragement. Others were attracted and interested in their movement. Associations multiplied in England, Scotland, on the Continent, and in the United States. Union in prayer and labour, in self-denial and self-sacrifice, for the salvation of souls, was followed by its promised blessing from above. God heard and answered. God looked down well pleased, and was with them to bless and do them good. His ear was opened. His hand was outstretched. The windows of heaven were unbarred. Showers of divine grace were poured down in copious measure on many a barren field, —here a little and there a little. The voice of joy and gladness was heard in every land. Praise and thanksgiving arose from many a new-born soul, from rejoicing friends, and from sympathizing angels. The hearts of young men buried in the pursuits of earth were again turned to their Saviour and his cause, and were led to ask, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Our theological seminaries began to multiply their diminished numbers, and, as the fields after the genial rain put on their green and flourishing attire, and gave promise of an abundant harvest, so also has God given the cheering prospect of labourers more adequate to his spiritual harvest.

And if such has been the beginning of this good work and such the first-fruits of these associations,

what may we expect in their maturity, through the mercy of that gracious Redeemer to whom the hearts of the young are so dear, and who has chosen by their instrumentality to perfect praise, and to do many and even greater works than eye hath yet seen, or ear heard, or have entered into the heart of man to conceive?

WHAT THESE ASSOCIATIONS MAY YET ACCOMPLISH.

The field is large, the door is open. There is yet room—oh, how much room!—for all that have a heart and a hand to work in the vineyard. The harvest is white, yea, perishing for lack of labourers, and of labourers beyond and supplementary to those who "are burdened" and broken down with the exhausting, overwhelming duties of the ministry. The canvassing of our cities for children to fill mission schools in their convenient neighbourhood and adapted to their social position,*—the distribution

* SUNDAY-SCHOOL CANVASS OF LONDON.—The Sunday-school canvass of the metropolis has commenced with every prospect of a successful result. Mr. Hartley, the Secretary of the Canvass Committee, says, "As far as can be ascertained the number of canvassers engaged in this important work is not less than eight or ten thousand. About one thousand copies of the 'Appeal to the Christians of London,' four hundred thousand copies of the 'Address to Parents,' seven thousand canvassers' books, and the same number of recommendation-books, have been prepared and put in circulation, and numerous meetings have been held to instruct and interest the

of Bibles, tracts, and books,—the establishment of local prayer and fellowship meetings and lectures,—co-operation with benevolent and charitable institutions for the relief of want and suffering,—the establishment of saving-banks for the poor, or such direction and advice concerning them as is necessary to make them available,—these, and whatever else will tend to elevate, reform, and render temperate, thrifty, prudent, and economical, the humbler classes of society, are "opportunities of doing good to all," which are not to be overlooked when it is in the power of their hand to use them:—

> Free-handed bounty! where her footsteps stray,
> Spring verdant trees around, and flowers that move
> Their thankful heads. Her treasure is above;
> And therefore doth she shrink from earthly praise,—
> Friend of the poor!

THE NUMBER OF CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN IN THE UNITED STATES.

There cannot be less than one million of young men among the four million of professors in the

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canvassers in the several districts of the metropolis." Such an army of Christian labourers, simultaneously perambulating the streets of London, penetrating every court and alley, visiting every house, and seeking to bring under religious instruction the entire youthful population, is probably an event unprecedented in the history of the Church, and richly deserves the hearty sympathy and earnest prayers of every Christian patriot and philanthropist.

thirty thousand evangelical churches of the United States, and not less than four million young men among the families connected with and under the influence of the sixteen million persons who are affiliated with those churches. What a host of workmen! What a field in which to work! What work may not such materials, wrought upon by such artificers, under the direction and wisdom and all-powerful grace of the Master-Workman—the divine Sculptor and the all-powerful Regenerator—accomplish! What new life may they not infuse into these churches! How may the sound of their voice, saying "come," swell the voice of the preached gospel, saying "come," until throughout all the earth there shall be no speech nor language where their voice is not heard,—none left to say unto his brother, "Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least unto the greatest!" What a noble testimony may not such a host, marshalled under the banners of the Crucified, bear to the glorious gospel of the blessed God! What an invincible protest may they not offer against atheism, scepticism, false philosophy, and error of every name and school; against bigotry, sectarianism, and every high thing that exalteth itself in opposition to the truth and power and love and glory of God, and to that peace and good-will which should prevail among men! What a shout may go up from such a multitude,—loud as the noise of many waters, or of a vic-

torious army when with acclamations of triumph it drives before it the retreating foe like chaff before the whirlwind, or as the sound of blest voices uttering joy which ascend to the throne of God and the Lamb from that innumerable company, whom no man can number, around the throne,—as they "lift up their voice with strength, as they lift it up, and are not afraid, and say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God."

THE GLORIOUS CONFEDERATION OF ALL CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN.

What a magnificent embodiment of Christian love would the association of these millions of young men present, drawn together and united and held together by "Him to whom shall be the gathering of the nations."* Having Christ in their heart the hope of glory, they find in Christ's church a home where "the social instincts of humanity, attracted by brotherly love, experience all that gratifies, gladdens, and purifies." And in the divine principle of association they have "a bond of perfectness;" a law of attraction; an atmosphere of light; an element of active, out-going, diffusive, and all-embracing charity, by which the divided are made one and the

* May not the power of these associations be vastly enhanced by associating with them Christian young women in affiliated union, and by co-operating with and superintending Young Women's Christian Associations for doing for young women what these do for young men?

sin-separated united by holy principles; an instinct stronger than any earth-born affection penetrating through all social, civil, political, and ecclesiastical distinctions, and drawing together into one heart-yearning, heart-satisfying affection the children of God, the partakers of one blood, brethren in Christ and heirs together through him to the same inheritance of glory.

This feeling of brotherhood, binding Christians together here as children not only of the same Father but also of the same mother, (for Jerusalem, or Zion, is the mother of us all,) would be a bond elastic enough and strong enough to encircle our land and the globe itself, and to unite together in one bundle of life—irresistible by its united strength as an aggressive weapon and secure against all assaults in its self-protecting combination—all who call upon the name of the Lord, both theirs and ours.

And it will yet do so. God will gather his children from the east, and gather them from the west. He will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back. Bring my sons from far and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and shall surname himself by the name of Israel. How blissful the contemplation of that

general assembly, that covenanted union of the children of God! Born by a new celestial birth, Jesus himself presiding over and blessing them; the representatives of all sects and parties shall meet to sing the jubilee of universal peace and celebrate the funeral of all their differences! Over that grave no tears shall be shed. Beside it no pale mourners shall stand. All quarrels and controversies and all weapons of war shall then be forever buried,—buried without hope or fear of a resurrection, while above, shining brightly and gloriously, heaven shall rise as the temple dedicated to eternal concord.

Glorious prophecy! Hasten it in our time, O Lord. Why tarry thy chariot-wheels? Tarry not. Defer not. Hearken and bless. Speak thou the word, and great shall be the multitude. Remember thy covenant which thou hast made, which thou hast spoken, which thou hast renewed and sealed by two immutable things,—thy promise and thy oath. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And let it come to pass in these days that thou wilt pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh. Then shall our sons and our daughters prophesy, and our young men see visions, and our old men dream dreams; and then shall it come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Even so, Lord Jesus; come quickly. For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as

brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. O ye watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem, hold not your peace day nor night. Make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee, O Zion; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

CHRISTIAN YOUNG MEN THE BOND OF NATIONAL UNION.

Before concluding, let me remark that there never was a time in this country when it was so important that Christians of all denominations should see eye to eye and be of one heart and one mind. The union of these States is the greatest miracle of God's political wisdom, power, and goodness, ever performed since the exodus of Israel and the establishment of the divine theocratic republic. Not the ark upon the whelming waters of a deluged world, with its living freight and its divine principles, was more important to the interests of humanity, or more significant of divine benignity, than is this ark bearing within its consecrated walls the life and power of a world whelmed in the flood of civil and religious despotism. And yet there are machinations of evil working with superhuman energy to under-

mine the foundations of that union, and to overturn and overturn, until all our hallowed institutions, civil, political, and religious,—the praise and envy of the whole earth,—are buried in one mass of ruins! And yet against that very ark Satan has let loose all the winds of heaven, and upheaved the ocean from its inmost depths to bury it in its fathomless abyss, and once more defeat, if he may, the merciful purposes of God towards man!

But the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Its builder and maker is God. The Lord in the midst of it is mighty. It is founded upon the Rock of ages. That ark is of divine construction, and was launched upon her billowy deep by the divine power. And he who guides her course can make even the winds to be still and the waves to cease, can encircle her with the bow of promise, make her framework durable as the everlasting mountains, and again send forth from her, to a world groaning under the corruption and abuses of superstition and despotic tyranny, the dove of loving peace, the olive-branch of hope, the pledges of liberty and of a renovated earth.

Thou too sail on, O ship of State,
Sail on, O Union strong and great!
Humanity—with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years—
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what master laid thy keel;
What workman wrought thy ribs of steel;

Who made each mast and sail and rope;
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock:
'Tis of the wave, and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest-roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith, triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!

For the realization, however, of this glorious prophecy, to what other agency can we look with greater confidence than to the union of our Christian young men throughout the land? These can "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." By these DISUNION can be averted and the UNION preserved. These can do more by their Christian fellowship and prayers and influence, than all the politicians in the land can do either for good or ill. "They have power with God to prevail."

And as at their recent conference these associations were invoked to employ this influence for the deliverance of our country and Britain our fatherland from war, so would I now invoke it for averting the still more dreadful calamity of civil war and political disunion.

I allude to this subject not as a politician,—for I

have never been identified with any one political party,—but as a Christian citizen who has been led to cherish these sentiments towards the land of his early adoption and matured affection,—and I do it because the most frightful peculiarity in the present conflict of opinion is the abandonment of the Bible as a standard of duty and of morals even by many professing Christians, their association with those who reject its authority altogether, and the consequent promulgation of principles which, once established, could lead only to agrarianism, anarchy, and bloodshed.

To you, my young friends, I would therefore address the truly eloquent, Christian, and patriotic words of the venerable Dr. Nott,—the American Nestor,—and thus blend the voice of the North with that of the South, in an appeal to your heart of hearts on behalf of our bleeding, lacerated country.*

'You enter,' says that venerable and patriotic Christian, 'upon life at a critical conjuncture. Your country stands in need of all the talents and all the influence you can carry with you to her assistance. May I not hope that, as you are numbered among her patriots and statesmen, your prudence will be as exemplary as your zeal? Though you

* Given in a Baccalaureate address to the students of Union College.

should differ in political opinions, be one in affection, one in the pursuit of glory, and one in the love of your country. Do nothing, say nothing, to produce unnecessary rigour on the one part or lawless resistance on the other. Beware how you contribute to awaken the whirlwind of passion, or to invite to this sacred land the reign of anarchy.

'Whatever irritations may be felt, whatever questions may be agitated, and however you yourselves may be divided, be it your part to calm, to soothe, to allay, to check the deed of violence, to charm down the spirit of party, to strengthen the bonds of social intercourse, and to prove by your own amiable deportment, by your own affectionate intercourse, that it is possible for brethren to differ and be BRETHREN STILL. Differ indeed you may, and avow that difference. Freedom of speech is your birthright. The deed which conveys it was written in the blood of your fathers; it was sealed beside their sepulchres: and let no man take it from you. But remember that the deed which conveys defines also, and limits, this freedom. And remember, too, that the line which divides between liberty and licentiousness is *but a line*, and that it is easily transgressed. The assassin's dagger is not more fatal to the peace of the community than the liar's tongue and the maligner's fang. Nor does the sacred charter of the freeman's privileges furnish to the one, any more than to the other, an asylum.

'It is your happiness to live under a government of laws. Nor, were it demonstrated that these were impolitic, or even oppressive, would it justify resistance. There is a redeeming principle in the Constitution itself. That instrument provides a legitimate remedy for grievances, and, unless on great emergencies, the only rightful one. Under a compact like ours, the majority must govern: the minority must submit, and they ought to submit. Not by constraint merely, but for conscience' sake. *The powers that be are ordained of God;* and, while they execute the purpose for which they were ordained, *to resist them is to resist the ordinance of God.*

'You remember that Jesus Christ paid tribute even unto Cæsar, than whom there has not lived a more execrable tyrant. You remember, too, that his immediate followers, as became the disciples of such a master, everywhere bowed to the supremacy of the Roman laws. It is a fact that will ever redound to the honour of the Christian church and of its divine Founder, that its members, though everywhere oppressed and persecuted for three successive centuries, were nowhere implicated in those commotions which agitated the provinces, nor were they ever accessory to those treasons which, during that period, so often stained the capital with blood.

'In the worst of times, therefore, and however you may differ with respect to men and measures, still cling

to the Constitution; CLING TO THE INTEGRITY OF THE UNION; cling to the institutions of your country. These, under God, are your political ARK of safety; the ark that contains the cradle of liberty in which you were rocked, that preserves the vase of Christianity in which you were baptized, and that defends the sacred urn where the ashes of your patriot fathers moulder. Cling, therefore, to this ark, and defend it while a drop of blood is propelled from your heart or a shred of muscle quivers on your bones. Triumph as the friends of liberty, of order, of religion, or fall as martyrs.'

A thrill of anxious foreboding runs through every bosom in this broad land. The national life is awake. It throbs with powerful emotion. It is alarmed for its own safety. False and treacherous physicians wait around, but only that by their baneful drugs they may hasten a catastrophe; while hungry heirs, from whom our country has long withheld the full measure both of the pre-eminence and profit they desire, are ready to rejoice over her as fallen,—sunk behind the dark clouds of desolation while her sun was yet shining more and more towards her promised day of glorious, unrivalled splendour.

Haste, then, to her relief. The United States of America expects that every man will do his duty. Only secure to her free air, prevent these poisonous dosings, and let her alone, and, with God's blessing sought and obtained by prayer, there is vitality

enough to outgrow all her distempers and to live to an enduring age amid the joyful acclamations of her own numerous posterity. May she thus live THE MOTHER OF US ALL!

May she thus abide with us, "not merely as a vast instrumentality for the protection of our commerce and navigation, and for achieving power and eminence among the sovereigns of the earth, but as a means of improving the material lot, of elevating the moral and mental nature, and of insuring the personal happiness, of the millions of many distant generations."

Or, to change our figure: the ship of the state is in the midst of breakers on a dangerous coast. She has deranged her compass, and has unshipped her rudder. She has no certain reckoning to guide her, for the sun has not been visible at its zenith for many days, and her brave and noble pilots one after another have been washed overboard at their dangerous post. What are we to do? Lower the boat, and let every man that can escape with his plunder do so? Not at all. We are as Paul was. We must do as Paul did. Every man must remain at his post of duty. Not a soul must give up the ship or give up hope. Only abide with her. Only rectify the compass and replace the rudder. Only cast overboard every weight, every false reliance, every carnal policy, every self-seeking, selfish, and merely-sectional cargo; and only let those who represent Paul

plead, as Paul did, with Paul's divine Master, and not a soul on board shall perish. He, the Lord of all, omnipotent to save, will come to our relief. He will command the winds and the waves, and they must obey him. They shall be at peace. The storm-clouds shall roll away before the favouring breeze. The sun shall again shine forth and the stars appear in their brightness. We shall all come safe to land. Not one shall perish; and there, safely moored, all perils over, we shall all together swell one prayer of praise and one song of thanksgiving to Him that hath done such great things for us. United in Christ, the Union is safe. *

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* "When my eyes," said Webster, "shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in the heavens, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonoured fragments of a once glorious Union,—on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent, —on a land rent with feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood. Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honoured throughout the earth, still full-high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre,—not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured,—bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as, 'What is all this worth?' —nor those other words of disunion and folly, 'Liberty first, and Union afterward;' but everywhere—spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land and in every wind under the whole heavens—that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart :—'Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.'"

While the language free and bold
  Which the bard of Avon sung,—
In which our Milton told
  How the vaults of heaven rung,
When Satan, blasted, fell with all his host.
  While these, with reverence meet,
  Ten thousand echoes greet,
  And from rock to rock repeat
    Round our coast!!
While the manners, while the arts,
  That mould a nation's soul,
Still cling around our hearts,
  Between let rivers roll,
Our joint communion breaking with the sun;
  Yet still from either side
  The bands of love stretched wide,
  With voice of blood shall reach,
  More audible than speech,
And loud proclaim to all that we are one.

"I have been abroad," says President Buchanan, "in other lands; I have witnessed arbitrary power; I have contemplated the people of other countries: but there is no country under God's heavens where a man feels for his fellow-man, except in the United States. And if you could feel how despotism looks on, how jealous despotic powers of the world are of our glorious institutions, you would cherish the Constitution and Union in your hearts,—next to your belief in the Christian religion:—the Bible for heaven, and the Constitution of your country for earth."

That is a beautiful figure of Winthrop's, in reference to our Constitution, where he says, "Like one of those wondrous rocking-stones raised by the Druids, which the finger of a child might vibrate to the centre yet the might of an army could not move from its place, our Constitution is so nicely poised that it seems to sway with the very breath of passion, yet so firmly based in the hearts and affections of the people, that the

THE COMMUNION OF CITIZENSHIP AND THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

Let us then,—for I am one of your fraternity,—let us cherish the communion of citizenship, and, above all, the communion of saints, the brotherhood of Christianity. The motto of our national union is the motto also of our Christian union:—E PLURIBUS UNUM,—one from many,—many united into one,—every one having his own peculiar and independent institutions, rights, interests, and policy, all having a

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wildest storms of treason and fanaticism break over it in vain." We trust that this may be verified.

"OUR NATIVE LAND.

"Home of our birth! our dear-loved land,
Thy glories stretch from sea to sea:
From ocean-lake to tropic strand;
Land of the fearless and the free!

"From where the western Golden Gate
Gleams ruddy in the sunset ray,
To where the stern Atlantic chain
Looks proudly on the rising day,—

"From far Niagara's deluge wild
To Florida's perennial flowers:
Ne'er hath the sun of heaven smiled
On such a heritage as ours.

"'God and the Union!' This our creed,—
Our motto this forever be:
So shall our starry banner float
Forever o'er the brave and free!"

common constitution, common dangers, and common glory or shame, prosperity or progress. And thus also, while there is one Lord and one Spirit, there are various gifts and diversities of administration in every church and in every individual Christian. The working of the Spirit in the one universal church, made up of all its separate members, is like "the breathings of the wind upon the ocean, no two waves shaping themselves to exact uniformity, and yet all curving and rippling into expressions of one great law, all answering to each other in perfect harmony as developments of one great principle. Every Christian has his own differentia, his own peculiar catalogue of hopes and aspirations and impulses; and yet he has also so much in common with all his brethren in Christ as to be able to make their language his own." Hence arise, like a forest of beautiful peaks soaring heavenward from a single mountain, the innumerable blessings not only of the communion of saints, but, above all, of holy fellowship, holy co-operation and striving together for the furtherance of the gospel.

Let us then, as fellow-workmen and fellow-pilgrims, walk hand in hand, bearing one another's burdens, helping each other's infirmities, forbearing one another in love, seeking the things that make for peace, each minding his own business and fulfilling his own task, and all looking for and hasting unto the coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Come, brothers! let us onward;
Night comes without delay,
And in this howling desert
It is not good to stay.
Take courage and be strong;
We are hasting on to heaven;
Strength for warfare will be given,
And glory won ere long.

The pilgrims' path of trial
We do not fear to view;
We know his voice who calls us,—
We know him to be true.
Then let who will contemn,
Come strong in his Almighty grace,
Come, every one with steadfast face!
On to Jerusalem!

O brothers, soon is ended
The journey we've begun;
Endure a little longer,—
The race will soon be run.
And in the land of rest—
In yonder bright eternal home
Where all the Father's loved ones come—
We shall be safe and blest.

Then, boldly let us venture!
This, this is worth the cost:
Though dangers we encounter,
Though every thing is lost,
O world! how vain thy call!
We follow him who went before,
We follow, to th' eternal shore,
Jesus, our all-in-all.

THE APPEAL.

God, my brothers, will not leave us;
Still his heaven is o'er us bent;
His commandments are not grievous:
Do his will, and be content.
Only truth and love shall flourish
In the end, beloved mates;
Only charity can nourish
Those whom charity creates.
Believe in God.

You have wrongs by forge and furnace,
You have darkness, you have dread;
But you work in radiant harness,
And your God is overhead.
Does not night bring forth the morning?
Does not darkness father light?
Even now we have forewarning,
Brothers, of the close of night.
Believe in God.

Many, many are the shadows
That the dawn of truth reveals
Beautiful on life's broad meadows
Is the light the Christian feels.
Evil shall give place to goodness,
Wrong be dispossess'd by right;
Out of old chaotic rudeness
God evokes a world of light.
Believe in God.

Do ye toil? Oh, freer, firmer
Ye shall grow beneath your toil;
Only craven spirits murmur,
Lightly rooted in the soil.
Through the gloom, and through the darkness,
Through the danger and the dole,
Through the mist and through the murkness,
Travels the great human soul.
Believe in God.

I through doubt and darkness travel
Through the agony and gloom,
Hoping that I shall unravel
This strange web beyond the tomb.
O my brothers! men heroic!
Workers both with hand and brain!
'Tis the Christian—not the Stoic—
That best triumphs over pain.
Believe in God.

O my brothers! love and labour!
Conquer wrong by doing right;
Truth alone must be your sabre,
Love alone your shield in fight.
Virtue yet shall cancel vices;
Look above, beloved mates!
Only God himself suffices
Those whom God alone creates.
Believe in God.

APPENDIX.

I.

SKETCHES OF YOUNG MEN.

Alexander of Macedon extended his power over Greece, conquered Egypt, rebuilt Alexandria, overran all Asia, and died at thirty-eight years of age.

Hannibal was but twenty-five when, after the fall of his father Hamilcar, and Asdrubal his successor, he was chosen commander-in-chief of the Carthaginian army. At twenty-seven, he captured Saguntum from the Romans. Before he was thirty-four, he carried his arms from Africa into Italy, conquered Publius Scipio on the banks of the Ticinus, routed Sempronius near the Trebia, defeated Flaminius on his approach to the Apennines, laid waste the whole country, defeated Fabius Maximus and Varro, marched into Capua, and at the age of thirty-five was thundering at the gates of Rome.

Scipio Africanus was scarcely sixteen when he took an active part in the battle of Cannæ and saved the life of his father. The wreck of the Roman cavalry chose him then for their leader, and he conducted them back to the capital. After he was twenty, he was appointed proconsul of Spain, where he took New Car-

thage by storm. Soon after he defeated successively Asdrubal, (Hannibal's brother,) Mago, and Hann, crossed over into Africa, negotiating with Syphax, the Massasylian king, returned to Spain, quelled the insurrection there, drove the Carthaginians wholly from the peninsula, returned to Rome, devised the diversion against the Carthaginians by carrying the war into Africa, crossed thither, destroyed the army of Syphax, compelled the return of Hannibal, and defeated Asdrubal a second time.

Charlemagne was crowned King of the Franks before he was twenty-six. At the age of twenty-eight, he had conquered Aquitania; at the age of thirty, he made himself master of the whole German and French Empires.

Charles XII., of Sweden, was declared of age by the States, and succeeded his father, at the age of fifteen. At eighteen, he headed the expedition against the Danes, whom he checked; and, with a fourth of their numbers, he cut to pieces the Russian army, commanded by the Czar Peter, at Narva, crossed the Dwina, gained a victory over the Saxons, and carried his arms into Poland. At twenty-one, he had conquered Poland and dictated to them a new sovereign. At twenty-four he had subdued Saxony, and at twenty-seven he was conducting his victorious troops into the heart of Russia, when a severe wound prevented his taking command in person, and resulted in his overthrow and subsequent treacherous captivity in Turkey.

Lafayette was major-general in the American army at the age of eighteen; was but twenty when he was wounded at the battle of Brandywine; but twenty-two

when he raised supplies for his army, on his own credit, at Baltimore; and but twenty-three when raised to the office of commander-in-chief of the National Guards of France.

Napoleon Bonaparte commenced his military career as an officer of artillery at the siege of Toulon. His splendid campaign in Italy was performed at the age of twenty-seven. During the next year, when he was about twenty-eight, he gained battle after battle over the Austrians in Italy, conquered Mantua, carried the war into Austria, ravaged the Tyrol, concluded an advantageous peace, took possession of Milan and the Venetian Republic, revolutionized Genoa, and formed the Cisalpine Republic. At the age of twenty-nine, he received the command of the army against Egypt, scattered the clouds of Mameluke cavalry, mastered Alexandria, Aboukir, and Cairo, and wrested the land of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies from the proud descendants of the prophet. At the age of thirty he fell among the Parisians like a thunderbolt, overthrew the directorial government, dispersed the Council of Five Hundred, and was proclaimed first consul. At the age of thirty-one he crossed the Alps with an army, and destroyed the Austrians by a blow at Marengo, At the age of thirty-two he established the Code of Napoleon; in the same year he was elected consul for life by the people, and at the age of thirty-three he was declared Emperor of the French nation.

William Pitt, the first Earl of Chatham, was but twenty-seven years of age when, as a member of Parliament, he waged the war of a giant against the corruptions of Sir Robert Walpole.

The younger Pitt was scarcely twenty years of age when, with masterly power, he grappled with the veterans in Parliament in favour of America. At twenty-two he was called to the high and responsible trust of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was his age when he came forth in his might on the affairs of the East Indies. At twenty-nine, during the first insanity of George III., he rallied around the Prince of Wales.

Edmund Burke, at the age of nineteen, planned a refutation of the metaphysical theories of Berkeley and Hume. At twenty he was in the Temple, the admiration of its inmates for the brilliancy of his genius and the variety of his acquisitions. At twenty-six he published his celebrated satire entitled "A Vindication of Natural Society." The same year he published his "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful,"—so much admired for its spirit of philosophical investigation and the elegance of its language. At twenty-five he was First Lord of the Treasury.

George Washington was only twenty-seven years of age when he covered the retreat of the British troops at Braddock's defeat, and the same year was appointed commander-in-chief of all the Virginia forces.

General Joseph Warren was only twenty-nine years of age when, in defiance of the British soldiers stationed at the door of the church, he pronounced the celebrated oration which aroused the spirit of liberty and patriotism that terminated in the achievement of independence. At thirty-four he gloriously fell, gallantly fighting for the cause of freedom, on Bunker Hill.

Alexander Hamilton was a lieutenant-colonel in the

army of the American Revolution and aide-de-camp to Washington at the age of twenty. At the age of twenty-five he was a member of Congress from New York; at thirty he was one of the ablest members of the Convention that formed the Constitution of the United States. At thirty-one he was a member of the New York Convention, and joint author of the great work entitled the "Federalist." At thirty-two he was Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, and arranged the financial branch of the government upon so perfect a plan that no great improvement has ever been made upon it by his successors.

Thomas Haywood, of North Carolina, was but thirty years of age when he signed the glorious record of a nation's birth,—the Declaration of Independence. Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, Benjamin Rush and James Wilson, of Pennsylvania, were but thirty-one years of age; Matthew Thornton, of New Hampshire, thirty-one; Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, Arthur Middleton, of South Carolina, and Thomas Stone, of Maryland, thirty-three; and William Hooper, of North Carolina, thirty-four.

John Jay, at twenty-nine years of age, was a member of the Revolutionary Congress, and, being associated with Lee and Livingston on the committee for drafting an address to the people of Great Britain, drew up that paper himself, which was considered one of the most eloquent productions of the time. At thirty-two he penned the Constitution of New York, and in the same year was appointed chief-justice of the State. At thirty-four he was appointed minister to Spain.

At the age of twenty-six, Thomas Jefferson was a

leading member of the Colonial Legislature of Virginia. At thirty he was a member of the Virginia Convention; at thirty-two a member of Congress; at thirty-three he drafted the Declaration of Independence.

Milton, at the age of twenty-three, had written his finest miscellaneous poems, including his "L'Allegro," "Penseroso," "Comus," and the most beautiful of his monodies.

Lord Byron, at the age of twenty, published his celebrated satire upon the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers;" at twenty-three, the first two cantos of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." Indeed, all the poetic treasures of his genius were poured forth in their richest profusion before he was thirty-four years old; and he died at thirty-seven.

Mozart, the great German musician, completed all his noblest compositions before he was thirty-four years old; and he died at thirty-six.

Pope wrote his published poems by the time he was nineteen years old; at twenty his "Essay on Criticism;" at twenty-one the "Rape of the Lock;" and at twenty-five his great work,—the translation of the Iliad.

Dr. Dwight's "Conquest of Canaan" was commenced at the age of sixteen and finished at twenty-two. At the latter age he composed his celebrated Dissertation on the history, eloquence, and poetry of the Bible, which was immediately published, and republished in Europe.

This list might be indefinitely multiplied by a reference to poets, reformers, divines, and missionaries, most of whom began early to develop and work out their mission for humanity, and, having done so, passed to their rest and recompense.

II.

We append the following article, which has just appeared in the Richmond Central Presbyterian, both as a very just delineation of these Associations and as presenting in the one at Richmond a good model to others.

THE PLACE FOR YOUNG MEN.

One of the noblest Institutions in this city is the Young Men's Christian Association. The pious ingenuity of the good has never devised an organization better fitted to accomplish two great and important ends, viz.: the social, intellectual, and moral improvement of its own members, and the temporal and spiritual welfare of those not connected with it, yet in whose behalf this organization exerts its influence.

There is such variety in its plans and in its means of usefulness that it is practically the ally of nearly every good enterprise known to society and to the church.

There is so much symmetry in its constitution, and such is the practical working of its different departments of labour, that it is capable of becoming the auxiliary to more objects of philanthropy and religion than any other society of which we have any knowledge. It has its committees for seeking out and relieving the destitute, for visiting the inmates of poor-houses and hospitals, for making the acquaintance of young men on their first arrival in the city, for the

purpose of aiding them in finding employment and for the purpose of surrounding them with moral and religious influences; it furnishes teachers to Sabbath-schools, it conducts strangers to the house of God: in a word, responsive to every call of benevolence and Christian zeal, this Society comes forward in all the alacrity and ardour of its youthful vigour, with the offer of its warm heart and strong arm, feeling honoured in having its services accepted, and delighting to render its efficient aid. Such are its relations to society at large; such its external work.

As to its inner life, we feel assured that, had the Young Men's Christian Association no other object than the improvement of its own members, this alone would render it worthy of the sympathy and support of every youth of generous feelings and honourable principles; for such is the nature of its organization that it calls into play and develops the finest social qualities of our nature; it throws young men together in such a way as to excite the kindest interest in each other, to soften and break down prejudices, and to awaken sentiments of mutual esteem and friendship.

Unlike other associations among young men which sometimes lead to rivalries and discord,—to the encouragement of coarse and vulgar manners, to the indulgence of a taste for low and degrading pleasures, and to the formation perhaps of dissipated habits,—the intercourse which results from *this* association is all elevating, pure, and refining. It tends to repress whatever is rude, selfish, and sensual, and to give development to all that is disinterested, generous, and

manly; for around all of its meetings, even those which are merely literary and most unreservedly social, there is thrown the gentle and sweetly-constraining influence of our common Christianity; and in all the genial flow of youthful spirits, in all the collision of mind with mind, while there is every thing in the ardour and spirit and glow of the intercourse to make it plain that it is a *young* men's association, still, it is never forgotten that it is a young men's *Christian* association.

For the entertainment and profit of its members it has established a library and reading-room; it has its meetings for friendly intercourse, its rhetorical society for literary exercises and forensic discussions, its meetings for business and its meetings for prayer; and, in addition to these means of mental and spiritual improvement, it has formed another circle for the study of the Holy Scriptures. On every Thursday night the Hall of the Association is thrown open to all who are willing to attend informal lectures and examinations on portions of Scripture selected for the occasion. This class is under the direction of one of the pastors of the city; and any young man who desires to become a member of it is at liberty to do so, whether he is a member of any church or not, and whether he is a member of the Association or not.

THE END.

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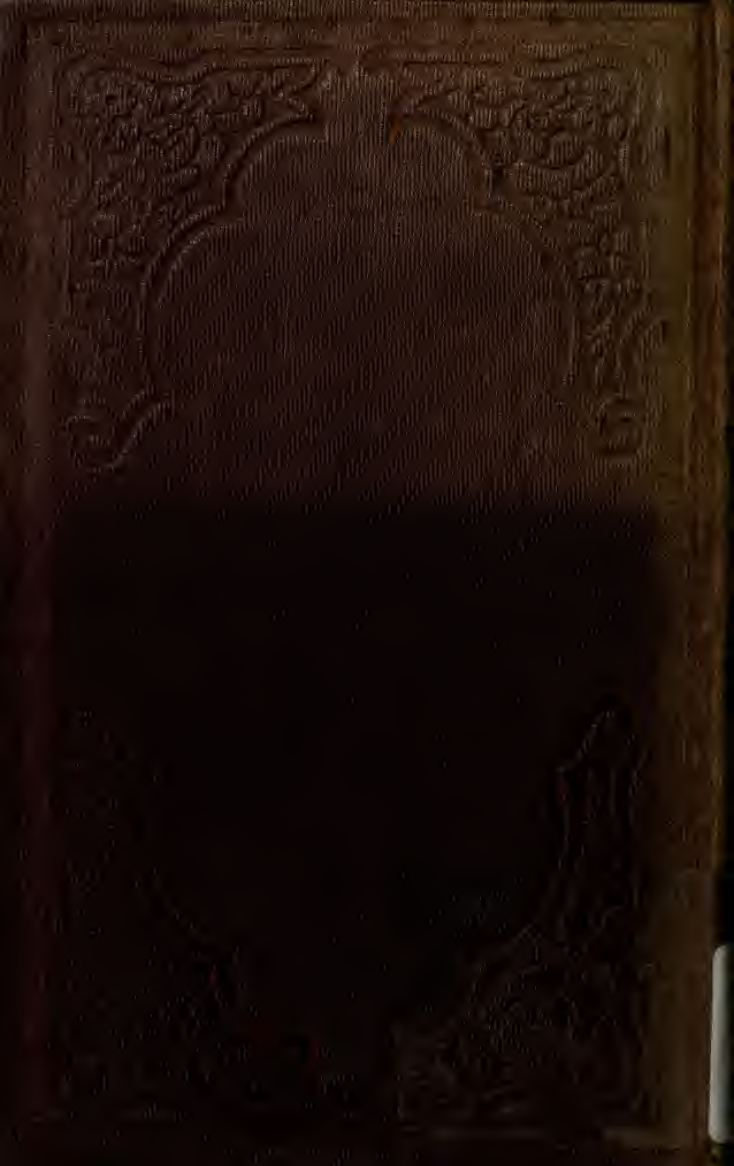
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